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THE MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF EDWARD GIBBON

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THE LIFE OF EDWARD GIBBON

WITH VARIOUS OBSERVATIONS AND EXCURSIONS

BY HIMSELF

EDITED BY

GEORGE BIRKBECK HILL, D.C.L., LL.D.

HONORARY FELLOW OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD

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PREFACE

If, as Johnson said, there had been only three books "written by man that were wished longer by their readers," the eighteenth century was not to draw to its close without seeing a fourth added. With *Don Quixote*, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Autobiography of Edward Gibbon* was henceforth to rank as "a work whose conclusion is perceived with an eye of sorrow, such as the traveller casts upon departing day". It is indeed so short that it can be read by the light of a single pair of candles; it is so interesting in its subject, and so alluring in its turns of thought and its style, that in a second and a third reading it gives scarcely less pleasure than in the first. Among the books in which men have told the story of their own lives it stands in the front rank. It is a striking fact that one of the first of autobiographies and the first of biographies were written in the same years. Boswell was still working at his *Life of Johnson* when Gibbon began those memoirs from which his autobiography, in the form in which it was given to the world, was so skilfully pieced together. But a short time had gone by since Johnson had said that "he did not think that the life of any literary man in England had been well written". That reproach against our writers he himself did much to lessen by his Lives of Cowley and of Milton, of Dryden and of Pope. It was finally removed by two members of that famous club which he had helped to found. However weak was the end of the eighteenth

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century in works of imagination, in one great branch of literature it faded nobly away. Both in the *Life of Johnson* and in the *Autobiography of Edward Gibbon*, it "left something so written to after-times as they should not willingly let it die". Another hundred years have gone by. Many Englishmen since then have written their lives; of many Englishmen the lives have been written by others. Each of these books, in its own class, still remains without a rival. Of each of them it may still be said: "Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere".

Admirable as is Gibbon's Autobiography in its present form, we cannot help speculating on the perfection which it might have attained had it been completed by the hands of the author. He was an accomplished artist, who both knew how to plan a stately temple, and how to give to every corner its utmost polish. Though he left his work imperfect, happily we have little need to exclaim with the poet:—

> Ah, who can raise that wand of magic power,
> Or the lost clue regain?
> The unfinished window in Aladdin's tower
> Unfinished must remain.

The six sketches of his life which he left, covering as they more or less did every part of it, excepting a year or two at the close, were in each one of these divisions so highly wrought that by a skilful editor they could be dovetailed into a single work which should show few traces of incompleteness. Judicious selection was what was most needed, for Gibbon in his different sketches often travelled over the same ground. In the main part of his task there seems nothing wanting. "The review of my moral and literary character," he wrote, "is the most interesting to myself and to the public." That review he left so nearly perfect that even he could have improved it but little.

Of the real merit of the autobiography his first editor, Lord Sheffield, shows an ignorance that seems strange indeed when we remember the skill with which he discharged his task. "It is to be lamented," he writes, "that all the sketches of the memoirs, except that composed in the form of annals, cease about twenty years before Mr. Gibbon's death; and consequently that we have the least detailed account of the most interesting part of his life." His lordship was misled by life's outward show and pomp. It was Gibbon in the splendour of his success, in the full blaze of the world, and not in the long and obscure stages of his growth that he wished to see portrayed. He loved to see his friend a member of Parliament and of the ministry, a writer of state papers, the companion of the most distinguished men at home or abroad, and basking in the warmth of his great reputation. This to him was the most interesting part of that unexampled life—this, which the great historian had in common with troops of famous men.

We may regret that Gibbon, when he had written his life, did not think it right "to amuse the reader with a gallery of portraits and a collection of anecdotes". To do so, as he tells us, "was most assuredly in his power". Admirable as they would have been in themselves, added to his autobiography, they would have lessened its perfection as a whole. Boswell boasts with justice that, in his *Life of Johnson*, "amidst a thousand entertaining and instructive episodes, the hero is never long out of sight". Scarcely for a single moment do we lose sight of the hero of the autobiography. It is the life of the author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and his life alone, that we read from the first page to the last. If he opens his narrative with John Gibbon, the Marmorarius of King Edward III., it is still his own life that, in a certain sense,

he is describing, for "we seemed to have lived in the persons of our forefathers". That "ideal longevity" of the past belongs to him as much as the "ideal longevity" of the future, when "his mind will be familiar to the grandchildren of those who are yet unborn". If he describes his maiden aunt, and her great struggles against adversity, she it was whom he gratefully acknowledged as "the true mother of his mind". If he dwells at length on the fourteen months he spent at Oxford, and on the five years he spent "on the banks of the Leman Lake," it was "to the fortunate banishment which placed him at Lausanne that the fruits of his education must be ascribed". His service in the militia could not be passed over in a brief paragraph, for however much "the reader may smile, the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire". The seat he held for some years in the House of Commons was worthy of notice, for there he found a "school of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian".

With the publication of the last volume of his history he felt his public life was complete. For himself, indeed, there still remained, he fondly hoped, a long "autumnal felicity," happier by far than his boyhood and his youth, happier, perhaps, even than those "twenty happy years, animated by the labours of his history," to which he owed that consciousness of high merit and that great fame which were the very breath of his nostrils. Of this part of his life the outside world need know nothing. He had shown them how a great historian was made. How he rested when once his long day's work was done, how he enjoyed himself, with what great men he lived, what he heard among them and what he saw—however interesting all this might be in itself, it formed no chapter in "the review of his moral aud literary character". It is this

self-restraint of the consummate artist, this wise reticence that gives us an almost perfect picture of a great scholar in a work that can easily be read through at a single sitting.

Mark Pattison joins Gibbon with Milton as two men "who are indulged without challenge in talk about themselves". In each "the gratification of self-love, which attends all autobiography, is felt to be subordinated to a nobler end". "It is his office," as poet or historian, "and not himself, which he magnifies." He who had written the *Decline and Fall* had a right to tell the world how he had been prepared for his great task. He was, it is true, a vain man, foolishly vain in the opinion he entertained of his ridiculous person, but of this kind of vanity there are few traces to be discovered in his autobiography. There is pride enough, unveiled consciousness of high desert, "a lofty and steady confidence in himself". This is not indeed displayed with Milton's noble and severe dignity. It is the pride of a great man who has worn a periwig all his life. If now and then we smile at the manner in which it is set forth, nevertheless we admit his claim.

> "Sume superbiam
> Quæsitam meritis."

We the more readily forgive his pride from the pleasure we take in reading his account of the formation of the strong character by which it was justified. There is a strange remark of Lowell's, where, speaking of "that element of manhood which, for want of a better name, we call character," he continues: "It is something distinct from genius, though all great geniuses are endowed with it. Hence we always think of Dante Alighieri, of Michael Angelo, of Will. Shakespeare, of John Milton, while of such men as Gibbon and Hume we merely recall the works, and think of them as the author of this and

that." That a man of letters, such as Lowell, should have said this of Hume surprises me, for "that fattest of Epicurus's hogs," so Gibbon described him, however much in his latter days he courted ease and the good opinion of the world, nevertheless even then showed a curious and interesting character of his own. Of Gibbon it is absurdly beside the mark. For one reader who has read his *Decline and Fall*, there are at least a score who have read his autobiography, and who know him, not as the great historian, but as a man of a most original and interesting nature. There is no one like him. No wonder that his friends, both English and French, used to speak of him as "the Gibbon, le Gibbon". He stands out, through the deepening mists of years, clear and strongly marked, with so many other members of the famous club, with Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Reynolds and Boswell.

Whether we like him is another question—love him we certainly do not. There were indeed one or two who loved him, whose love he had earned by the steadiness and the warmth of his friendship. He had, however, too much of the "rational voluptuary" to be able to win our affection. His self-indulgence we are the more inclined to despise, as in his later years it rendered his person ridiculous through its unwieldy corpulence. He had besides other and greater failings. In a young man, in the full flow of his life, we are less ready to forgive untruthfulness than when we come across it in one who is stricken with the timidity of age. He was only twenty when he sent, through his father, the falsest message of affection to his unknown step-mother, whom he was, as he tells us, in reality disposed to hate as his own mother's rival.[1] Only a few years later, when he should have been still in the generous freshness of youth, he gave a friend that shameless advice

[1] *Post*, p. 113, *n.*

about love and married women which Lord Chesterfield gave in the calculating coldness of old age.[1] In middle age, "at the beginning of the memorable contest between Great Britain and America," he took his seat in Parliament. At such a time a man, deeply read as he was in the reverses of great empires, might well have been swayed by none but the loftiest of motives. When he looked back upon that "school of civil prudence," in which he had sat for eight sessions, where, by many a silent vote, he had supported those measures which gave his country the deepest wound she has ever suffered, he owned that in entering Parliament all his views had been bounded by the hope of the sinecure office which he at length attained at the Board of Trade.[2] We are set against him moreover by the indecency of his writings, however much he "veiled it in the obscurity of a learned language". We might have found some excuse for a wantonness which sprang from strong passions; but who can forgive "une obscénité érudite et froide"?[3]

To set off against these grievous faults there was that noble and unwearying industry which has given the world *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. To this industry was added an accuracy which Porson pronounces to be scrupulous, and his latest editor, amazing. If he is sometimes unfair, if "his humanity never slumbers unless when women are ravished or the Christians persecuted," he does not intentionally alter or even suppress facts. Through fourteen long centuries spreads the track of his toilsome and accurate investigations. To him, too, might be applied in large, though not in full measure, that praise which he bestowed on Bayle: that "Nature had designed him to think as he pleased, and to speak as he

[1] *Post*, p. 153. [2] *Post*, p. 193, *n*.
[3] It is thus that Sainte-Beuve describes it. *Post*, p. 231, *n*.

thought". If at times he veiled his scepticism with an affectation of belief, part of the blame must be borne by the law of the land, which still held the threat of three years' imprisonment over anyone who, having been educated in the Christian religion should, by writing, deny it to be true. "Christianity," wrote Blackstone, "is part of the laws of England." Offences against it "are punishable by fine and imprisonment or other infamous corporal punishment". Many years after Gibbon's time men were imprisoned for "profane scoffing at the Holy Scriptures," for doing rudely and avowedly what he had done politely and covertly. After the long war that he had waged against the stifling of truth by the Church of Rome, his fall was deep indeed, when, under the terror inspired by the French Revolution, he urged some Portuguese gentlemen not to give up, at such a crisis, the Inquisition.

The publication that closely followed on the hundredth anniversary of his death of the six sketches from which the autobiography was compiled threw a most interesting light on the great historian's method of work. To Mr. John Murray—who by the purchase of the copyright, first made them public—every student of our literature is deeply indebted. To his enterprise, moreover, they owe the two volumes of correspondence, in which a large addition was made to the letters of Gibbon already in print. Grateful acknowledgment also is due to Miss Jane H. Adeane, the editor of that charming book, *The Girlhood of Maria Josepha Holroyd*, where we see our hero in that pleasant mansion which he spoke of as his English home, and also in that other home which he had above the banks of the Leman Lake, whose "prospect was crowned by the stupendous mountains of Savoy".

Important as was the publication of these sketches, it had not the full importance assigned to it by the present

Earl of Sheffield in his introduction to the volume. The blunder into which he has fallen is strange indeed. Johnson, I am aware, "was of opinion, that when a man of rank appeared in the character of a candidate for literary fame, he deserved to have his merit handsomely allowed". I might, therefore, perhaps have concealed my astonishment at his lordship's mistake had he not been countenanced in it by Mr. Frederic Harrison, to whom he acknowledges his "obligation for assistance in the preparation and composition of this preface". They are both, therefore, equally responsible for the following statement: "A piece, most elaborately composed by one of the greatest writers who ever used our language, an autobiography often pronounced to be the best we possess, is now proved to be in no sense the simple work of that illustrious pen, but to have been dexterously pieced together out of seven fragmentary sketches and adapted into a single and coherent narrative". All this should have been known to everyone who had read the autobiography with any care, for so much as that the first Lord Sheffield tells in a note on the first page. "This passage," he writes, "is found in one only of the six sketches, and in that which seems to have been the first written."[1] In the preface he shows how his part of the work was done. "Although," he writes, "I have in some measure newly arranged those interesting papers by forming one regular narrative from the six different sketches, I have nevertheless adhered with scrupulous fidelity to the very words of their author." When nearly twenty years later on he brought out a second edition, he recalled the fact that it was "from six different sketches, and from notes and memoranda, that the memoirs were composed and formed".

[1] What the latest editors describe as the seventh sketch he included among "loose unconnected papers and cards all in Mr. Gibbon's handwriting".

There was no need to exaggerate the importance of the publication of these different sketches. If we did not learn for the first time that the autobiography was the work of two hands, we were at all events admitted into the very workshop, as it were, of one of our great writers. There was, moreover, opened to us for the first time many a striking passage that had been suppressed by Lord Sheffield. The new work, with all its authenticity and all its additions, can never supplant, however, the compilation which has been the delight of many generations of readers. Every student of English literature will have it on his shelves; in every library that is worthy of the name it will have a place; but it is the autobiography as it has been known to the world for more than a hundred years that we shall read by the fireside.

Lord Sheffield went beyond the strict truth in asserting that he had "adhered with scrupulous fidelity to the very words of the author". The changes that he made were by no means few. None was more daring than the emendation by which he redeemed the character for gentility of the Lausanne boarding-house where he and the historian first met. "The boarders," wrote Gibbon, "were numerous." "Numerous" offended his lordship's dignity. In his revised version we read that "the boarders were select".[1] Some changes he made for propriety's sake. Thus Gibbon, after telling us how his grandfather, "at a mature age, erected the edifice of a new fortune," continued: "I have reason to believe that the second temple was not much inferior to the first". *Temple* was changed into *structure*,[2] and the train of thought that would have been raised by the allusion was lost. In the account of his "elopements" from Magdalen College, he wrote: "I was

[1] *Post*, p. 156; *Autobiography*, p. 208.
[2] *Post*, p. 20; *Auto.*, p. 16.

too young and bashful to enjoy, like a manly Oxonian in town, the taverns and bagnios of Convent Garden". The last part of the sentence was veiled by the editor under the "pleasures of London".[1] Some of the changes were made to lessen the author's display of his own merits, and some to moderate his swelling language. Of his sacrifices in relieving his father from the pressure of debt he wrote: "Under these painful circumstances my own behaviour was not only guiltless but meritorious. Without stipulating any personal advantages, I consented, at a mature and well-informed age, to an additional mortgage," etc. Under the editor's ruthless pruning-knife the luxuriance of these words was cut down to the following bare statement: "Under these painful circumstances I consented to an additional mortgage".[2] Neither was Gibbon allowed, in his later years, "to applaud as easy and happy" his youthful emendation of a passage in Latin. It was enough for the world to know that it was adopted by the learned editor of Livy.[3] In these last two instances there is nothing more than omissions; in the following we have an example of the editor's simplification of his friend's exuberant style. In the autobiography, as it was given to the world, we read: "It had been my intention to pass the Alps in the autumn, but such are the simple attractions of the place that *the year had almost expired* before my departure from Lausanne in the ensuing spring". The fact stated in the words which I have italicised had been expressed by Gibbon in the three following ways, nevertheless not one of these could win his editor's approbation: "The annual circle was almost revolved"; "the summer was lost in the autumn and succeeding winter"; "the summer and autumn were lost in the succeeding winter".

[1] *Post*, p. 65; *Autobiography*, p. 82.
[2] *Post*, p. 185; *Auto.*, p. 287.
[3] *Post*, p. 100; *Auto.*, p. 146.

Nay, even in a fourth version, recasting the sentence, he said: "The simple charms of nature and society detained me at the foot of the Alps till the ensuing spring".[1] "Whatsoever may have been the fruits of my education," he wrote in another passage, "they must be ascribed to the fortunate shipwreck which cast me on the shores of the Leman Lake." The metaphor was too bold to be allowed to pass, so that these fruits were ascribed "to the fortunate banishment which placed me at Lausanne".[2] Writing of his return to England from his continental tour, he said: "I tore myself from the embraces of Paris. . . . I reached the rural mansion of my parents." This was too much for Lord Sheffield, who made him say, just as if it were an ordinary Englishman coming home and not "The Gibbon": "I reluctantly left Paris. . . . I arrived at my father's house."[3] It was surely not without reason that the historian, in his autobiography, recorded of his future editor: "My friend has never cultivated the art of composition".

Of the suppressions many were due to an unwillingness to cause scandal or to give offence. Thus in speaking of his youthful essay, *The Age of Sesostris*, and of his solution of a difficulty in the chronology, Gibbon wrote: "In my supposition the high priest is guilty of a voluntary error: flattery is the prolific parent of falsehood; and falsehood, I will now add, is not incompatible with the sacerdotal character". The last part of the sentence was not allowed to appear in print.[4] The writer, it seems likely, was not thinking so much of priests in general as of the divines, "the polemics of either university," who had discharged their "ecclesiastical ordnance" against *The Decline and*

[1] *Post*, p. 154; *Autobiography*, pp. 205, 263, 301, 404.
[2] *Post*, p. 108; *Auto.*, p. 239.
[3] *Post*, p. 168; *Auto.*, p. 271.
[4] *Post*, p. 64; *Auto.*, p. 80.

Fall of the Roman Empire. If he attacked the Church he was not more sparing of the military service. In his account of his three years' service in the militia he wrote: "My temper was insensibly soured by the society of our rustic officers, who were alike deficient in the knowledge of scholars and the manners of gentlemen". Lord Sheffield did not allow the latter half of the sentence to appear.[1] An hour may be pleasantly spent in examining these suppressions in Mr. Murray's edition. The brackets in which they are enclosed make tracking them an easy work. As we read them we find ourselves wishing that his lordship had been as indiscreet as Boswell.

Respect for Mr. Murray's copyright has made me sparing in emendations. My text, with the exception of a few words, is Lord Sheffield's. It does not, however, exactly correspond with either his first or his second edition; for it contains two or three passages which are found only in one or other of these, but not in both. When he came to re-edit the work he made omissions as well as additions. In two recent reprints I was surprised to find not a single trace of the famous passage in which Gibbon foretold that "the romance of *Tom Jones*, that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escurial and the imperial eagle of the House of Austria". In the first edition this exaltation of Fielding over the Habsburghs does not appear, and it was from this edition that these two reprints were made. On the other hand, Mr. Murray, who evidently had the second edition before him, has marked as "portions hitherto unpublished" some passages which are included in the first edition. One striking description I do not find in any one of the seven sketches, though undoubtedly it comes from Gibbon's hand. It is where he shows his readers Lord North seated on the Treasury

[1] *Post*, p. 138; *Autobiography*, p. 189.

Bench, supported by Thurlow and Wedderburne, and opposed by Barré and Dunning, by Burke and Fox.[1]

The letters and long extracts from Gibbon's journal, both in English and French, inserted as footnotes by Lord Sheffield, are, in the present edition, either for the most part omitted or else are transferred to the appendix. In giving an appendix as well as footnotes I am following the example set by Professor Bury in his learned edition of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Gibbon himself began by placing all his notes at the end of each volume. With reluctance, yielding to "the public importunity, he removed them," in later editions, "to the bottom of the page". One of my chief aims has been to throw light on Gibbon's character from his own writings. Many of my notes are drawn from *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and many from the five volumes of his *Miscellaneous Works*. Of his correspondence, too, I have made great use. To Mr. Murray we owe a large debt of gratitude for printing the letters exactly as they were written. We discovered for the first time the daring liberties Lord Sheffield had at times taken in giving to the world a patchwork of extracts as one entire letter. Thus, on page 95 of the second volume of the *Miscellaneous Works*, there is a short letter, dated 13th October, 1772. It contains but four paragraphs. Of these the first was written on 21st April of that year, the second on 3rd October, the third on 3rd November, the first four lines of the fourth on 30th October, the next two lines on 15th October, and the last on 30th October.[2] On the date given by his lordship, not a single word was written. This, however, is an extreme case.

[1] See *Post*, p. 192, and *Autobiography*, p. 310, where this passage should be found.

[2] See *Correspondence*, i., 155, 165, 166, 169.

Though by far the larger part of my quotations from the *Correspondence* are found in the first two volumes of the *Miscellaneous Works*, nevertheless, for the convenience of my reader, my references are to Mr. Murray's edition of the *Correspondence*.

To Lord Sheffield's daughter, Maria Josepha Holroyd, whose *Girlhood* has delighted many a reader, is commonly attributed, since the recent publications, a large share in that excellent piece of work by which, out of seven fragments, was formed one almost perfect whole. In the preface to the *Autobiography* we are told that "she evidently marked the manuscripts in pencil handwriting (now recognised as hers) for the printer's copyist. These pencil deletions, transpositions and even additions correspond with the *Autobiography* as published by Lord Sheffield". Nothing can justly be inferred from this, for we learn from one of her own letters that she often was her father's amanuensis. Three months before Gibbon's death, she wrote: "I think the excursion to Tunbridge Wells will be a good thing for papa, because he will be more engaged, and he will not write or use his eyes, which he will do, even by candle light, at home sometimes, though we write for him all the morning".[1] Eight months later she mentions the engagement of a secretary, "recommended by Mr. Hayley, who had him from Mr. Cowper, the author of *The Task*. He is about sixteen; has had a good education; can read Latin and French; and is to have £20 a year, and to live with the servants. He will be particularly useful, as papa intends to undertake the arrangement of Mr. Gibbon's memoirs and letters for the public eye."[2] She tells us, moreover, whose assistance it was that her father did use in the

[1] *The Girlhood of Maria Josepha Holroyd*, p. 243.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 286.

more difficult part of his task. Writing on 28th August, 1794, of the arrival at Sheffield Place of William Hayley, the poet, with a barrister named More, who spoke sensibly and clearly, but with "the pertness and conceit natural to all young lawyers," she continued: "Mr. Hayley, Mr. More and Miss Poole are closeted reading Mr. Gibbon's memoirs, etc., and Mr. Hayley thinks a great deal must be omitted in publication. I hope his advice will be taken, for I have a great opinion of his judgment." A fortnight later she wrote: "I was quite happy that papa and he agreed in every material point relative to the memoirs, etc. They found much to lop off; but much, very much, of a most interesting nature will remain, and by Mr. Hayley's assistance I think such a work will appear next spring as the public have not been treated with for many years. . . . Mr. More was an excellent person to attend the committee. He was as good a judge as the two others in point of sense and feeling; at the same time that being unprejudicial to Mr. Gibbon as a friend, he gave the opinion of an impartial person, which frequently furnished the other members of the committee with useful hints."[1] Eighteen months later, when "the Gibbonian memoirs" were going through the press, she wrote: "Milady [her stepmother, the second Lady Sheffield] and I are excellent devils, and corrected yesterday three sheets of sixteen pages each".[2] There is not a word to show that she played anything but a minor part in the work of editing. It was, we must assume, as the amanuensis, perhaps of the "committee," perhaps of her father only, that she marked the manuscripts.

I discovered with real regret in the course of my reading that two passages that throw a charm over the genealogies

[1] *The Girlhood of Maria Josepha Holroyd*, p. 303.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 365.

with which the autobiography opens had been proved to be mere illusions. To that pride of descent "from a patron and martyr of learning," which Gibbon felt as "a man of letters," he had no just claim. More than a hundred years ago Sir Egerton Brydges showed that the historian was not sprung from the Baron Say and Seale who was murdered by Jack Cade for the crime of "erecting a grammar school," and "building a paper mill contrary to the king, his crown and dignity".[1] In our own day Mr. J. H. Round has, at a blow, demolished the fabric by which Henry Fielding and his kinsmen, the Earls of Denbigh, were made "the brethren" of "the successors of Charles the Fifth".[2]

I have done my best to trace the quotations and allusions which are scattered throughout the autobiography. Two, however, have baffled me, though I have consulted some of the best Latin scholars in three universities. No one can tell me in what poet is to be found the lines:—

> "Manus haec inimica tyrannis
> Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem";

nor who wrote: "Est sacrificulus in pago, et rusticos decipit".[3]

I have to acknowledge the kind assistance which I have received from Mr. G. K. Fortescue, the Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum, who has once more facilitated my researches in the library in every way in his power, and has besides allowed me to draw freely on his wide knowledge. Gibbon lamented the want of a public library "in the greatest city of the world". Had he lived in these happier days, even the charms of Lausanne might not have been strong enough to draw him away from the

[1] *Post*, p. 11, *n.* 2. [2] *Ib.*, p. 5, *n.* 2. [3] *Ib.*, pp. 102, 171.

British Museum. There, if anywhere, is to be found that Respublica Literatorum to whom Bodley dedicated his noble library.

To the President of Magdalen College I am indebted, both for the assistance he gave me in my investigations into the state of his college as it was in the middle of last century, and also for drawing my attention to General Meredith Read's Historic Studies in Vaud, Berne and Savoy, a work in which is described in the greatest detail Lausanne and its inhabitants as they were known to Gibbon. The general had the run, as it were, of all the garrets in the houses of the old families of that town, in which were stored up the dusty records of past generations. Many a memorial did he find of Gibbon himself. He dined off the Wedgewood ware which the historian had sent for from England, while the table was furnished with his table linen, so ample had been the store and so durable the quality. He even had a glimpse, though only a glimpse, of the few remaining bottles of the great man's Madeira. Letters and other documents he discovered in large numbers, many of them in Gibbon's handwriting, and many in Voltaire's and Rousseau's. None of these, unfortunately, with one solitary exception, has he given in the original. Everything he has translated. One letter of Gibbon's, and one only, is printed in the French in which it was written. It was thought better (to borrow, with a change of one word, a line from *The Decline and Fall*) "to veil it in the obscurity of a *foreign* language".[1] A real service would be done to literature were the most interesting of these papers published in their original form.

My task in editing this famous autobiography has cost me many months more work than I had counted on when my publisher first asked me to undertake it. It has, how-

[1] See *Post*, p. 153, *n* 4.

ever, been a labour of love. If I succeed in winning the approval of scholars I shall be fully repaid.

G. B. H.

HAMPSTEAD,
April 4, 1900.[1]

[1] The following are the editions of the works to which I most frequently refer :—

Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, edited by J. B. Bury, 7 vols. London. Methuen & Company, 1897.

Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, edited by John, Lord Sheffield. Second edition, 5 vols. London. John Murray, 1814.

Gibbon's *Correspondence*, edited by Rowland E. Prothero, 2 vols. London. John Murray, 1896.

Gibbon's *Autobiographies*, edited by John Murray. Second edition, 2 vols. London. John Murray, 1897.

Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, edited by George Birkbeck Hill, 6 vols. Clarendon Press, 1887.

Voltaire. *Œuvres Complètes*, 66 tom. Paris, 1819-25.

The title of the present edition is Gibbon's own. I found it, in his handwriting, in the manuscript of the various sketches of the *Autobiography* now preserved in the British Museum.

EXTRACTS

FROM

LORD SHEFFIELD'S

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION

OF THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS OF MR. GIBBON.

The melancholy duty of examining the papers of my deceased friend devolved upon me at a time when I was depressed by severe afflictions.

In that state of mind, I hesitated to undertake the task of selecting and preparing his manuscripts for the press. The warmth of my early and long attachment to Mr. Gibbon made me conscious of a partiality which it was not proper to indulge, especially in revising many of his juvenile and unfinished compositions. I had to guard, not only against a sentiment like my own, which I found extensively diffused, but also against the eagerness occasioned by a very general curiosity to see in print every literary relic, however imperfect, of so distinguished a writer.

Being aware how disgracefully authors of eminence have been often treated by an indiscreet posthumous publication of fragments and careless effusions; when I had selected those papers which, to myself, appeared the fittest for the public eye, I consulted some of our common friends, whom I knew to be equally anxious with myself for Mr.

Gibbon's fame, and fully competent from their judgment to protect it.

Under such a sanction it is that, no longer suspecting myself to view through too favourable a medium the compositions of my friend, I now venture to publish them: and it may here be proper to give some information to the reader respecting the contents of these volumes.

The most important part consists of memoirs of Mr. Gibbon's life and writings, a work which he seems to have projected with peculiar solicitude and attention, and of which he left six different sketches, all in his own handwriting. One of these sketches, the most diffuse and circumstantial so far as it proceeds, ends at the time when he quitted Oxford. Another at the year 1764, when he travelled to Italy. A third, at his father's death in 1770. A fourth, which he continued to March 1791, appears in the form of annals, much less detailed than the others. The two remaining sketches are still more imperfect. But it is difficult to discover the order in which these several pieces were written. From all of them the following memoirs have been carefully selected and put together.

My hesitation in giving these memoirs to the world arose principally from the circumstance of Mr. Gibbon's seeming, in some respect, not to have been quite satisfied with them, as he had so frequently varied their form: yet, notwithstanding this diffidence, the compositions, though unfinished, are so excellent, that I think myself justified in permitting my friend to appear as his own biographer, rather than to have that office undertaken by any other person less qualified for it.

This opinion has rendered me anxious to publish the present memoirs without any unnecessary delay; for I am persuaded that the author of them cannot be made to

appear in a truer light than he does in the following pages. In them, and in his different letters, which I have added, will be found a complete picture of his talents, his disposition, his studies, and his attainments.

Those slight variations of character, which naturally arose in the progress of his life, will be unfolded in a series of letters selected from a correspondence between him and myself, which continued full thirty years, and ended with his death.

It is to be lamented, that all the sketches of the memoirs, except that composed in the form of annals, cease about twenty years before Mr. Gibbon's death; and consequently that we have the least detailed account of the most interesting part of his life. His correspondence during that period will, in great measure, supply the deficiency. It will be separated from the memoirs, and placed in an appendix, that those who are not disposed to be pleased with the repetitions, familiarities and trivial circumstances, of epistolary writing, may not be embarrassed by it. By many the letters will be found a very interesting part of the present publication. They will prove how pleasant, friendly and amiable Mr. Gibbon was in private life; and if in publishing letters so flattering to myself I incur the imputation of vanity, I shall meet the charge with a frank confession, that I am indeed highly vain of having enjoyed for so many years the esteem, the confidence and the affection of a man, whose social qualities endeared him to the most accomplished society, and whose talents, great as they were, must be acknowledged to have been fully equalled by the sincerity of his friendship.

Whatever censure may be pointed against the editor, the public will set a due value on the letters for their intrinsic merit. I must indeed be blinded either by vanity or affection, if they do not display the heart and mind of

their author in such a manner as justly to increase the number of his admirers.

I have not been solicitous to garble or expunge passages which to some may appear trifling. Such passages will often, in the opinion of the observing reader, mark the character of the writer; and the omission of them would materially take from the ease and familiarity of authentic letters.

Few men, I believe, have ever so fully unveiled their own character, by a minute narrative of their sentiments and pursuits, as Mr. Gibbon will here be found to have done; not with study and labour—not with an affected frankness—but with a genuine confession of his little foibles and peculiarities, and a good-humoured and natural display of his own conduct and opinions.

Mr. Gibbon began a journal, a work distinct from the sketches already mentioned, in the early part of his life, with the following declaration:—

"I propose from this day (24th August, 1761) to keep an exact journal of my actions and studies, both to assist my memory, and to accustom me to set a due value on my time. I shall begin by setting down some few events of my past life, the dates of which I can remember."

This industrious project he pursued occasionally in French, with the minuteness, fidelity and liberality of a mind resolved to watch over and improve itself.

The journal is continued under different titles, and is sometimes very concise, and sometimes singularly detailed. One part of it is entitled "My Journal," another "Ephemerides, or Journal of my Actions, Studies and Opinions". The other parts are entitled "Ephémérides, ou Journal de ma Vie, de mes Etudes, et de mes Sentimens". In this journal, among the most trivial circumstances, are mixed very interesting observations and dissertations on a satire

of Juvenal, a passage of Homer or of Longinus, or of any other author whose works he happened to read in the course of the day; and he often passes from a remark on the most common event, to a critical disquisition of considerable learning, or an inquiry into some abstruse point of philosophy.

It certainly was not his intention that this private and motley diary should be presented to the public; nor have I thought myself at liberty to present it in the shape in which he left it. But when reduced to an account of *his literary occupations*, it forms so singular and so interesting a portrait of an indefatigable student, that I persuade myself it will be regarded as a valuable acquisition by the literary world, and as an accession of fame to the memory of my friend.

. . . . . .

In the collection of writings which I am now sending to the press, there is no article that will so much engage the public attention as the memoirs. I will, therefore, close all I mean to say as their editor, by assuring the reader, that although I have in some measure newly arranged those interesting papers, by forming one regular narrative from the six different sketches, I have nevertheless adhered with scrupulous fidelity to the very words of their author; and I use the letter S to mark such notes as it seemed to me necessary to add.

It remains only to express a wish that, in discharging this latest office of affection, my regard to the memory of my friend may appear, as I trust it will do, proportioned to the high satisfaction which I enjoyed for many years in possessing his entire confidence, and very partial attachment.

SHEFFIELD.

SHEFFIELD PLACE,
6th Aug., 1795.

EXTRACT

FROM

LORD SHEFFIELD'S

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION

It will be remembered that the memoirs were composed and formed from six different sketches, and from notes and memoranda on loose unconnected papers and cards, all in Mr. Gibbon's handwriting. This new edition of his posthumous works has furnished me with the opportunity of interweaving several additional extracts from the same sources; illustrating and enlarging the memoirs, where they were most scanty, by notes principally selected from his journal.

SHEFFIELD.

SHEFFIELD PLACE,
24th Nov., 1814.

MEMOIRS

OF

MY LIFE AND WRITINGS

IN the fifty-second year of my age, after the completion of an arduous and successful work, I now propose to employ some moments of my leisure in reviewing the simple transactions of a private and literary life. Truth, naked unblushing truth, the first virtue of more serious history, must be the sole recommendation of this personal narrative. The style shall be simple and familiar; but style is the image of character,[1] and the habits of correct writing may produce, without labour or design, the appearance of art and study.[2] My own amusement is my motive, and will be my reward: and if these sheets are communicated to some discreet and indulgent friends, they will be secreted from the public eye till the author shall be removed beyond the reach of criticism or ridicule.[3]

[1] [See *post*, p. 190, where he says that "the style of an author should be the image of his mind". Buffon had said before him: "Le style est l'homme même". If style is the image of character, the general absence of style is explained by Pope, who says:—

"Most women have no characters at all"

(*Moral Essays*, ii., 2);

and by Johnson, who goes still further, maintaining that "the greater part of mankind have no character at all" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 355). Wordsworth, criticising Johnson's assertion, says that "every man has a character of his own to the eye that has skill to perceive it" (Wordsworth's *Works*, ed. 1857, vi., 316).]

[2] ["He that has once studiously formed a style rarely writes afterwards with complete ease" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 284).]

[3] This passage is found in one only of the six sketches, and in that which seems to have been the first written, and which was laid aside among loose papers. Mr. Gibbon, in his communications with me on the subject of his Memoirs, a subject which he had never mentioned to any other person, expressed a determination of publishing them in his lifetime; and never appears to have departed from that resolution, excepting in one of his letters annexed, in which he intimates a doubt, though rather carelessly, whether in his time, or at any time, they would meet the eye of the public. In a conversation, however, not long before his death, I suggested to him that, if he should make them a full image of his mind, he would not have nerves to publish them, and therefore that they should be posthumous. He answered, rather eagerly, that he was determined to publish them *in his lifetime*.—SHEFFIELD. [For the

A lively desire of knowing and of recording our ancestors so generally prevails, that it must depend on the influence of some common principle in the minds of men. We seem to have lived in the persons of our forefathers; it is the labour and reward of vanity to extend the term of this ideal longevity. Our imagination is always active to enlarge the narrow circle in which Nature has confined us. Fifty or an hundred years may be allotted to an individual, but we step [1] forwards beyond death with such hopes as religion and philosophy will suggest; and we fill up the silent vacancy that precedes our birth, by associating ourselves to the authors of our existence. Our calmer judgment will rather tend to moderate, than to suppress, the pride of an ancient and worthy race. The satirist may laugh,[2] the philosopher may preach;[3] but Reason herself

"letter annexed," dated January 6, 1793, see *Corres.*, ii., 357. He writes: "Of the Memoirs little has been done, and with that little I am not satisfied. They must be postponed till a mature season; and I much doubt whether the book and the author can ever see the light at the same time." On December 28, 1791, he had written: "I have much revolved the plan of the Memoirs I once mentioned, and, as you do not think it ridiculous, I believe I shall make an attempt. If I can please myself I am confident of not displeasing; but let this be a profound secret between us; people must not be prepared to laugh, they must be taken by surprise" (*ib.*, ii., 280). Even by this earlier date he had made more than one attempt. A sketch that forms an important part of the Memoirs as published was finished on March 2, 1791 (*Auto.*, p. 349).]

[1] [In the original, "stretch" (*Auto.*, p. 417).]

[2] ["Stemmata quid faciunt? Quid prodest, Pontice, longo
Sanguine censeri, pictosque ostendere vultus
Majorum, et stantes in curribus Æmilianos,
Et Curios jam dimidios, humeroque minorem
Corvinum, et Galbam oculis nasoque carentem?"
(Juvenal, *Sat.* viii., 1.)

Savage writes in the opening lines of *The Bastard*:—

"He lives to build, not boast, a generous race;
No tenth transmitter of a foolish face".

Young says of the nobleman:—

"He stands for fame on his forefathers' feet,
By heraldry prov'd valiant or discreet.
With what a decent pride he throws his eyes
Above the man by three descents less wise!
If virtues at his noble hands you crave,
You bid him raise his father's from the grave.
Men should press forward in fame's glorious chase;
Nobles look backward, and so lose the race."
(*The Universal Passion*, *Sat.* i., l. 131.)]

[3] ["The sophists of every age, despising, or affecting to despise, the accidental distinctions of birth and fortune, reserve their esteem for the superior qualities of the mind, with which they themselves are so plentifully endowed" (*The Decline*, ii., 486).]

will respect the prejudices and habits, which have been consecrated by the experience of mankind.[1] Few there are who can sincerely despise in others an advantage of which they are secretly ambitious to partake. The knowledge of our own family from a remote period will be always esteemed as an abstract pre-eminence, since it can never be promiscuously enjoyed; but the longest series of peasants and mechanics would not afford much gratification to the pride of their descendant. We wish to discover our ancestors, but we wish to discover them possessed of ample fortunes, adorned with honourable titles, and holding an eminent rank in the class of hereditary nobles, which has been maintained for the wisest and most beneficial purposes in almost every climate of the globe, and in almost every modification of political society.[2]

Wherever the distinction of birth is allowed to form a superior order in the state, education and example should always, and will often, produce among them a dignity of sentiment and propriety of conduct, which is guarded from dishonour by their own and the public esteem. If we read of some illustrious line so ancient that it has no beginning, so worthy that it ought to have no end, we sympathize in its various fortunes; nor can we blame the generous enthusiasm, or even the harmless vanity, of those who are allied to the honours of its name. For my own part, could I draw my pedigree from a general, a statesman, or a celebrated author, I should study their lives with the diligence of filial love. In the investigation of past events, our curiosity is stimulated by

[1] [The rest of the paragraph to "political society" first appears in the second edition. In its arrangement it differs in some places from the original, which in *Auto.*, p. 417, is marked as hitherto unpublished.]

[2] ["But, sir (said Johnson), as subordination is very necessary for society, and contentions for superiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to say, all civilised nations, have settled it upon a plain, invariable principle. A man is born to hereditary rank; or his being appointed to certain offices gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness. Were we all upon an equality we should have no other enjoyment than mere animal pleasure" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 442).

Satan maintained in Hell that

"Orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist".
(*Paradise Lost*, v., 792.)]

the immediate or indirect reference to ourselves ; but in the estimate of honour we should learn to value the gifts of Nature above those of Fortune ; to esteem in our ancestors the qualities that best promote the interests of society ; and to pronounce the descendant of a king less truly noble than the offspring of a man of genius, whose writings will instruct or delight the latest posterity.[1] The family of Confucius is, in my opinion, the most illustrious in the world. After a painful ascent of eight or ten centuries, our barons and princes of Europe are lost in the darkness of the middle ages ; but, in the vast equality of the empire of China, the posterity of Confucius have maintained, above two thousand two hundred years, their peaceful honours and perpetual succession. The chief of the family is still revered, by the sovereign and the people, as the lively image of the wisest of mankind. The nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough ; but I exhort them to consider the *Fairy Queen*[2] as the most precious jewel of their coronet. Our immortal Fielding was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who draw their origin from the Counts of Habsburgh, the lineal descendants of Ethico, in the seventh century, Duke of Alsace.[3] Far different have been the fortunes of the English and German divisions of the family of Habsburgh ; the former, the knights and sheriffs of Leicestershire, have slowly risen to the dignity

[1] ["Few there are who dare trust the memorials of their family to the public annals of their country" (*The Decline*, vi., 460).]

[2] "Nor less praiseworthy are the ladies [sisters] three,
The honour of that noble familie,
Of which I meanest boast myself to be."
(Spenser, *Colin Clout*, etc., v., 538.)—GIBBON.

[The second daughter of the great Duke of Marlborough married Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, whose eldest son succeeded his aunt, Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, in the Dukedom. From the Earl's youngest son, Gibbon's friend, the second Earl Spencer, was descended.]

[3] [Gibbon gives a brief account of Ethico in his "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick," *Misc. Works*, iii., 504.

"The origin of this family [the Habsburg] has been a constant puzzle to the fertile imaginations of genealogists. Some among them trace it back to the Merovingians, others to the Carolingians ; others, again, to that Duke Ethico, of Alamania, who is supposed to have been the common stock from which sprang the houses of Habsburg, Lorraine and Baden" (Leger's *Austro-Hungary*, English trans., p. 141).]

of a peerage ;[1] the latter, the Emperors of Germany and Kings of Spain, have threatened the liberty of the old, and invaded the treasures of the new world. The successors of Charles the Fifth may disdain their brethren of England ; but the romance of Tom Jones, that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escurial, and the imperial eagle of the house of Austria.[2]

That these sentiments are just, or at least natural, I am inclined to believe, since I do not feel myself interested in the cause ; for I can derive from my ancestors neither glory nor shame.[3] Yet a sincere and simple narrative of my own life may amuse some of my leisure hours ; but it will subject me, and perhaps with justice, to the imputation of vanity. I may judge, however, from the experience both of past and of

[1] ["Geffery, Earl of Hapsburgh, by the oppression of Rodolph, Emperor of Germany, being reduced to extreme poverty, one of his sons, named Geffery, served King Henry III. in his wars in England, and because his father had pretensions to the dominions of Laufenburgh and Rinfilding, he took the name of Fielding" (Collins's *Peerage*, ed. 1756, ii., 247). The peerage was conferred by James I. (*ib.*, p. 251).

The novelist "being in company with the Earl of Denbigh, his kinsman, the Earl asked him how it was that he spelled his name 'Fielding' and not 'Feilding,' like the head of the house. 'I cannot tell, my Lord,' said he, 'except it be that my branch of the family were the first that knew how to spell'" (Thackeray's *English Humourists*, ed. 1858, p. 282).]

[2] ["There can be no gainsaying the sentence of this great judge. To have your name mentioned by Gibbon is like having it written on the dome of St. Peter's. Pilgrims from all the world admire and behold it" (*ib.*, p. 275). Gibbon again praises *Tom Jones*, *post*, p. 243, *n.* In *The Decline*, iii., 363, he speaks of it as "the romance of a great master, which may be considered as the history of human nature". Mr. J. H. Round, in *The Genealogist*, New Series, x., 193, has "demonstrated that the Habsburg descent of the Fieldings is an absurd fiction". It first appeared in print, he believes, in 1656, in Dugdale's *Warwickshire*. The splendour of Gibbon's language is but a "baseless fabric" ; happily the pageant, insubstantial though it may be, shall never fade away.

The Earls of Denbigh may be consoled. If they have lost the Habsburghs, of Henry Fielding they cannot be deprived.]

[3] [Gibbon, writing to John Nichols about his ancestry, says : "Modesty, or the affectation of modesty, may repeat the *Vix ea nostra voco ;* but experience has proved that there is scarcely any man of a tolerable family who does not wish to know as much as he can about it ; nor is such an ambition either foolish in itself, or hurtful to society" (Nichols, *Lit. Anec.*, viii., 557). Gibbon's quotation is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, xiii., 140 :—

"Genus, et proavos, et quae non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco".

Thus Englished by Johnson (*Rambler*, No. 46) :—

"Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim ;
All is my own, my honour and my shame".]

the present times, that the public are always curious to know the men, who have left behind them any image of their minds: the most scanty accounts of such men are compiled with diligence, and perused with eagerness[1]; and the student of every class may derive a lesson, or an example, from the lives most similar to his own. My name may hereafter be placed among the thousand articles of a Biographia Britannica[2]; and I must be conscious, that no one is so well qualified, as myself, to describe the series of my thoughts and actions. The authority of my masters, of the grave Thuanus,[3] and the philosophic Hume,[4] might be sufficient to justify my design; but it would not be difficult to produce a long list of ancients and moderns, who, in various forms, have exhibited their own portraits. Such portraits are often the most interesting, and sometimes the only interesting parts of their writings; and if they be sincere, we seldom complain of the minuteness or prolixity of these personal memorials. The lives of the younger Pliny, of Petrarch, and of Erasmus, are expressed in the epistles, which they themselves have given to the world. The essays of Montaigne and Sir William Temple bring us home to the houses and bosoms of the authors[5]: we smile

[1] ["The biographical part of literature," said Johnson, "is what I love most" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 425).]

[2] [Horace Walpole (*Works*, i., 412) speaks of "the benign author of the *Biographia Britannica*, a work which I cannot help calling *vindicatio Britannica*, or a defence of everybody".]

[3] [The French historian De Thou, whose *Historia sui Temporis* in 138 books Johnson once thought of translating (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 410; see also *ib.*, i., 32). His *Autobiography* is in vol. vii. of the edition of his *Historia*, published in London in 1733.

Burnet "made him his pattern in history". See the Preface by the Bishop's son to Burnet's *Hist. of His Own Time*, p. 3. Gibbon includes him with Hume in what he calls "a small but *venerable* synod of historians". "Since the origin of Theological Factions some historians, Ammianus Marcellinus [*post*, p. 181], Fra-Paolo, Thuanus, Hume, and perhaps a few others, have deserved the singular praise of holding the balance with a steady and equal hand" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 624).]

[4] [Hume's brief autobiography, written shortly before his death, was prefixed to the later editions of his *History*. I have edited it in my edition of his *Letters to William Strahan*.]

[5] [Gibbon perhaps had running in his head the passage where Bacon, in the dedication of his *Essays*, says that "they come home to men's business and bosoms".]

without contempt at the headstrong passions of Benevenuto Cellini, and the gay follies of Colley Cibber.[1] The confessions of St. Austin and Rousseau disclose the secrets of the human heart; the commentaries of the learned Huet[2] have survived his evangelical demonstration; and the memoirs of Goldoni are more truly dramatic than his Italian comedies. The heretic and the churchman are strongly marked in the characters and fortunes of Whiston[3] and Bishop Newton[4]; and even the dullness of Michael de Marolles[5] and Anthony Wood[6] acquires some value from the faithful representation of men and manners. That I am equal or superior to some of these, the efforts[7] of modesty or affectation cannot force me to dissemble.

[1] [Horace Walpole (*Letters*, v., 197) said that "Cibber's *Apology* deserved immortality".]

[2] [Huet, Bishop of Avranches, published in 1718 *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus*. Sainte-Beuve, quoting some "vers badins" of Voltaire's on Huet, continues: "Soyez donc la plume la plus savante de l'Europe, l'homme de la plus vaste lecture qui fut jamais, le dernier de cette forte race des savants du xvᵉ et du xvɪᵉ siècle, . . . et tout cela pour que, sitôt après vous, on ne sache plus que votre nom, et qu'on n'y rattache qu'une idée vague, un sourire né d'une plaisanterie! Ah! que le sage Huet avait raison quand il démontrait presque géométriquement quelle vanité et quelle extravagance c'est de croire qu'il y a une réputation qui nous appartienne après notre mort!" (*Causeries*, ii., 163.)]

[3] ["The honest, pious, visionary Whiston," Gibbon calls him (*The Decline*, iv., 433). Though he was heretic enough to be banished from the University of Cambridge for his Arianism (Whiston's *Memoirs*, p. 173; Monk's *Bentley*, i., 290), he was as superstitious as the most orthodox. In 1746 he gave notice that the Millennium would begin in 1766, when "there will be no more an infidel in Christendom, and there will be no more a gaming-table at Tunbridge" (*Memoirs*, p. 398). He had once fixed an earlier date. Horace Walpole (*Letters*, i., 381) mentions "the Duchess of Bolton's geographical resolution of going to China, when Whiston told her the world would be burnt in three years".]

[4] [*Post*, p. 211.]

[5] ["Michel de Marolles (1600-1681) composa soixante-neuf ouvrages, dont plusieurs étaient des traductions très utiles dans leur temps" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 124).]

[6] ["Mr. Joyner told me Mr. Wood used often to come to him, and that he told him many stories which he (Mr. Wood) penned down in his presence, and when anything pleased Mr. Wood, he would always cry *Hum*, upon which Mr. Joyner would go on to expatiate" (Hearne's *Remains*, ed. 1869, iii., 70).

"May 4, 1781. Mine a great character! Mercy on me! I am a composition of Anthony Wood and Madame Danois [d'Aulnoy], and I know not what trumpery writers" (Horace Walpole's *Letters*, viii., 34).]

[7] [In Lord Sheffield's editions, "effects".]

My family is originally derived from the county of Kent.[1] The southern district, which borders on Sussex and the sea, was formerly overspread with the great forest Anderida, and even now retains the denomination of the *Weald* or Woodland. In this district, and in the hundred and parish of Rolvenden, the Gibbons were possessed of lands in the year one thousand three hundred and twenty-six; and the elder branch of the family, without much increase or diminution of property, still adheres to its native soil. Fourteen years after the first appearance of his name, John Gibbon is recorded as the Marmorarius or architect of King Edward the Third: the strong and stately castle of Queensborough, which guarded the entrance of the Medway, was a monument of his skill; and the grant of an hereditary toll on the passage from Sandwich to Stonar, in the Isle of Thanet, is the reward of no vulgar artist. In the visitations of the heralds, the Gibbons are frequently mentioned; they held the rank of Esquire in an age, when that title was less promiscuously assumed[2]: one of them, under the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was captain of the militia of Kent; and a free school, in the neighbouring town of Benenden, proclaims the charity and opulence of its founder.[3] But time, or their own obscurity, has cast a veil of

[1] [Part of the history of his family he derives from a letter in *The Gent. Mag.*, 1788, p. 698. In a letter to John Nichols, the editor, he calls it "a very curious and civil account of the Gibbon family". Nichols forwarded to him some "genealogical documents relating to Mr. Gibbon's family; amongst them 'some Remarques of the Family of me, John Gibbon, Bluemantle Pursuivant at Arms,' with a full pedigree of the family, and several emblazoned arms" (Nichols, *Lit. Anec.*, viii., 557; *Corres.*, ii., 301, 328).]

[2] ["Esquires and gentlemen," writes Blackstone, "are confounded together by Sir Edward Coke, who observes that every esquire is a gentleman, and a gentleman is defined to be one *qui arma gerit*, who bears coat-armour, the grant of which adds gentility to a man's family. . . . It is, indeed, a matter somewhat unsettled, what constitutes the distinction, or who is a real *esquire*." Here follows an enumeration of the various sorts of esquires (*Commentaries*, ed. 1775, i., 406).

So early as 1709 *The Tatler* (No. 19) wrote: "In a word it is now *Populus Armigerorum*, a people of Esquires. And I don't know but by the late act of naturalisation, foreigners will assume that title as part of the immunity of being Englishmen." Eighty years later Boswell says that "the appellation of Gentleman was lost in the indiscriminate assumption of *Esquire*" (*Life of Johnson*, i., 34).]

[3] [Benenden is near Rolvenden. "Edward Gibbon, in 1602, founded a school, which has been subsequently endowed with property producing £114 *per annum*" (Lewis's *Topog. Dict.*, ed. 1835, under BENENDEN).]

oblivion over the virtues and vices of my Kentish ancestors; their character or station confined them to the labours and pleasures of a rural life: nor is it in my power to follow the advice of the Poet, in an inquiry after a name,—

> Go! search it there, where to be born, and die,
> Of rich and poor makes all the history.[1]

So recent is the institution of our parish registers.[2] In the beginning of the seventeenth century, a younger branch of the Gibbons of Rolvenden migrated from the country to the city; and from this branch I do not blush to descend. The law requires some abilities; the church imposes some restraints; and before our army and navy, our civil establishments, and Indian empire, had opened so many paths of fortune, the mercantile profession was more frequently chosen by youths of a liberal race and education, who aspired to create their own independence. Our most respectable families have not disdained the counting-house, or even the shop; their names are enrolled in the Livery and Companies of London; and in England, as well as in the Italian commonwealths, heralds have been compelled to declare that gentility is not degraded by the exercise of trade.[3]

The armorial ensigns which, in the times of chivalry, adorned the crest and shield of the soldier, are now become an empty decoration, which every man, who has money to build a carriage, may paint according to his fancy on the panels.[4] My family arms are the same, which were borne by the Gibbons of Kent in an age, when the College of Heralds

[1] [Pope, *Moral Essays*, iii., 287.]

[2] ["Church Register was instituted 30 Henry VIII." John Gibbon's *Introductio ad Latinam Blasoniam*, Preface.
In *The Gent. Mag.*, 1785, p. 93, a copy is given of a "Constitution" of the year 1597, "in which it was ordeyned how the Register Bookes must be sauffly kept".]

[3] [See Appendix 1].

[4] [Blackstone, writing of "the *court military*, or court of *chivalry*," says that "its civil jurisdiction is principally in two points; the redressing injuries of honour, and correcting encroachments in matters of coat-armour, precedency, and other distinctions of families. . . . It is the business of this court, according to Sir Matthew Hale, to adjust the right and armorial ensigns, bearings, crests, supporters, pennons, etc." (*Commentaries*, ed. 1775, iii., 103-5).]

religiously guarded the distinctions of blood and name: a lion rampant gardant, between three schallop-shells argent, on a field azure.[1] I should not however have been tempted to blazon my coat of arms, were it not connected with a whimsical anecdote.—About the reign of James the First, the three harmless schallop-shells were changed by Edmund Gibbon esq. into three *Ogresses*, or female cannibals,[2] with a design of stigmatizing three ladies, his kinswomen, who had provoked him by an unjust law-suit. But this singular mode of revenge, for which he obtained the sanction of Sir William Seagar, king at arms, soon expired with its author; and, on his own monument in the Temple church, the monsters vanish, and the three schallop-shells resume their proper and hereditary place.

Our alliances by marriage it is not disgraceful to mention. The chief honour of my ancestry is James Fiens, Baron Say and Seale, and Lord High Treasurer of England, in the reign of Henry the Sixth; from whom by the Phelips, the Whetnalls, and the Cromers, I am lineally descended in the eleventh degree.[3] His dismission and imprisonment in the Tower were insufficient to appease the popular clamour; and the Treasurer, with his son-in-law Cromer, was beheaded (1450), after a mock trial by the Kentish insurgents. The black list of his offences, as it is exhibited in Shakespeare,[4] displays the ignorance and envy of a plebeian tyrant. Besides the vague reproaches of selling Maine and Normandy to the Dauphin, the Treasurer is specially accused of luxury, for riding on a foot-cloth; and of treason, for speaking French, the language of our enemies: "Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm," says Jack Cade to the unfortunate Lord,

[1] The father of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke married an heiress of this family of Gibbon. The Chancellor's escutcheon in the Temple Hall quarters the arms of Gibbon, as does also that, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, of Charles York, Chancellor in 1770.—SHEFFIELD.

[2] [For an explanation of this "heraldic pun" see *Auto.*, p. 4, *n.*]

[3] [The descent was through Robert Gibbon, from whom he was not sprung, according to Brydges. See note 2 on next page.]

[4] [2 *Henry VI.*, Act iv., Scenes 2 and 7.]

"in erecting a grammar-school; and whereas before our forefathers had no other books than the score and the tally, thou hast caused printing to be used; and, contrary to the king, his crown, and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill. It will be proved to thy face, that thou hast men about thee, who usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words, as no christian ear can endure to hear." Our dramatic poet is generally more attentive to character than to history; and I much fear that the art of printing was not introduced into England, till several years after Lord Say's death; but of some of these meritorious crimes I should hope to find my ancestor guilty; and a man of letters may be proud of his descent from a patron and martyr of learning.

In the beginning of the last century Robert Gibbon esq. of Rolvenden in Kent [1] (who died in 1618), had a son of the same name of Robert, who settled in London, and became a member of the Clothworkers' Company. His wife was a daughter of the Edgars, who flourished about four hundred years in the county of Suffolk, and produced an eminent and wealthy serjeant-at-law, Sir Gregory Edgar, in the reign of Henry the Seventh. Of the sons of Robert Gibbon (who died in 1643), Matthew [2] did not aspire above

[1] Robert Gibbon, my lineal ancestor in the fifth degree, was captain of the Kentish militia, and as he died in the year 1618 it may be presumed that he had appeared in arms at the time of the Spanish invasion. His wife was Margaret Phillips, daughter of Edward Phillips de la Weld in Tenterden, and of Rose his wife, daughter of George Whitnell of East Peckham, esquire. Peckham, the seat of the Whitnells in Kent, is mentioned, not indeed much to its honour, in the *Mémoires du Comte de Grammont* [English ed., 1876, p. 292], a classic work, the delight of every man and woman of taste to whom the French language is familiar [*post*, p. 133].—GIBBON. [East Peckham is between Tunbridge and Maidstone.]

[2] [Sir S. E. Brydges in *The Gent. Mag.*, 1796, p. 271, says that: "Matthew Gibbon was the son of Thomas Gibbon, of Westcliffe near Dover, gent., of a totally different, and more distant branch of the Rolvenden family, who was a man of considerable landed, and personal property". Thomas's grandfather, also Thomas Gibbon, was "a wealthy and illiterate yeoman. He died in 1596." Matthew Gibbon's mother was sister to the wife of Sir John Maynard, the old serjeant-at-law, who, but for the coming of the Prince of Orange, "would have outlived, not only all the men of the law of his time, but the law itself" (Burnet's *Hist. of His Own Time*, ed. 1818, ii., 441). "Matthew's half-brother, Thomas, married the sister of Sir William Rooke, father of Sir George Rooke the admiral."]

the station of a linen-draper in Leadenhall-street; but John has given to the public some curious memorials of his existence, his character, and his family. He was born on the third of November in the year 1629; his education was liberal, at a grammar school, and afterwards in Jesus College at Cambridge; and he celebrates the retired content which he enjoyed at Allesborough, in Worcestershire, in the house of Thomas Lord Coventry,[1] where he was employed as a domestic tutor, the same office which Mr. Hobbes exercised in the Devonshire family.[2] But the spirit of my kinsman soon immerged into more active life: he visited foreign countries as a soldier and a traveller, acquired the knowledge of the French and Spanish languages, passed some time in the Isle of Jersey, crossed the Atlantic, and resided upwards of a twelvemonth (1659) in the rising colony of Virginia. In this remote province his taste, or rather passion, for heraldry found a singular gratification at a war-dance of the native Indians. As they moved in measured steps, brandishing their tomahawks, his curious eye contemplated their little shields of bark, and their naked bodies, which were painted with the colours and symbols of his favourite science. "At which I exceedingly wondered; and concluded that heraldry was ingrafted *naturally* into the sense of human race. If so, it deserves a greater esteem than now-a-days is put upon it."[3] His return to England after the Restoration was soon followed by his marriage—his settlement in a house in St. Catherine's Cloister, near the Tower, which devolved to my grandfather—and his introduction into the Heralds' College (in 1671) by the style and title of Blue-mantle Pur-

[1] [The second Earl of Coventry. Allesborough is close to Pershore.]

[2] ["Qui per multos annos servivit duobus comitibus Devoniæ (patri et filio)." So Hobbes described himself in his epitaph (Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, ed. A. Clark, i., 386).]

[3] [*Introductio*, etc., p. 156. La Fontaine might have had this passage in mind when he wrote (*Fables*, x., 16):—

"Le noble poursuivit:
Moi, je sais le blason; j'en veux tenir école.
Comme si, devers l'Inde, on eût eu dans l'esprit
La sotte vanité de ce jargon frivole!"]

suivant at Arms. In this office he enjoyed near fifty years the rare felicity of uniting, in the same pursuit, his duty and inclination: his name is remembered in the College, and many of his letters are still preserved. Several of the most respectable characters of the age, Sir William Dugdale,[1] Mr. Ashmole, Dr. John Betts and Dr. Nehemiah Grew, were his friends; and in the society of such men, John Gibbon may be recorded without disgrace as the member of an astrological club.[2] The study of hereditary honours is favourable to the Royal prerogative; and my kinsman, like most of his family, was a high Tory both in church and state. In the latter end of the reign of Charles the Second, his pen was exercised in the cause of the Duke of York: the Republican faction he most cordially detested; and as each animal is conscious of its proper arms, the herald's revenge was emblazoned on a most diabolical escutcheon.[3] But the triumph of the Whig government checked the preferment of Blue-mantle; and he was even suspended from his office, till his tongue could learn to pronounce the oath of abjuration.[4] His life was prolonged

[1] ["'Sir William Dugdale avowed to mee that at the time of his birth . . . . a swarme of bees came and settled under the window where hee was borne. September 18. Johan. Gybbon.' . . . 'He was borne September 12, 1605' —from Mr. Gibbons, Blewmantle. That afternoon a swarme of bees pitch't under his mother's chamber-window, as it were an omen of his laborious collections" (Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, i., 241).]

[2] ["When the king was prisoner in Carisbrook Castle, an astrologer was consulted what hour would be found most favourable to an escape" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 154. See William Lilly's *History of his Life*, ed. 1826, pp. 61, 63).

"One of Dryden's opinions will do him no honour in the present age, though in his own time, at least in the beginning of it, he was far from having it confined to himself. He put great confidence in the prognostications of judicial astrology" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 300). Dryden defended his belief by the authority of "not only Horace and Persius, but Augustus himself" (Dryden's *Works*, ed. 1882, xiv., 167).]

[3] ["Tutus sit augustissimus Rex Carolus, Sancti Fœlicis Festo prospere natus; Celsissimus Illustrissimus Dux Jacobus, quem Stellam Borealem ante multos annos prædixere Vates; et universa Stirps Regia a Turba Fanatica Antimonarchica; Quibus Symbolum et Insigne est Bellua multorum Capitum, coloris Diabolici (viz. nigri) in Campo sanguineo (Armes pour enquerir, ut dicimus Gallice). Clamor bellicus: Iste est Hæres, trucidemus eum, et obtineamus Hæreditatem" (*Introductio*, etc., p. 165). Littré defines *armes à enquérir* as "armes qui, étant contre les règles ordinaires, font qu'en les voyant on se demande la raison de cette manière extraordinaire".]

[4] [By the act of Abjuration, passed in the last year of William III., "all persons in any office, trust, or employment," were required to take an oath abjuring "the pretended Prince of Wales" (Blackstone's *Commentaries*, i., 368; Smollett's *Hist. of England*, ed. 1800, i., 436).]

to the age of ninety: and, in the expectation of the inevitable though uncertain hour,[1] he wishes to preserve the blessings of health, competence, and virtue. In the year 1682 he published in London his *Introductio ad Latinam Blasoniam,* an original attempt, which Camden had desiderated, to define, in a Roman idiom, the terms and attributes of a Gothic institution.[2] It is not two years since I acquired, in a foreign land, some domestic intelligence of my own family; and this intelligence was conveyed to Switzerland from the heart of Germany. I had formed an acquaintance with Mr. *Langer*, a lively and ingenious scholar, while he resided at Lausanne as preceptor to the Hereditary Prince of *Brunswick*.[3] On his return to his proper station of Librarian to the Ducal Library of Wolfenbuttel, he accidentally found among some literary rubbish a small old English volume of heraldry, inscribed with the name of *John Gibbon*. From the title only Mr. *Langer* judged that it might be an acceptable present to his friend; and he judged rightly. His manner is quaint and affected; his order is confused: but he displays some wit, more reading, and still more enthusiasm: and if an enthusiast be often absurd, he is never languid. An English text is perpetually interspersed with Latin sentences in prose and verse; but in his own poetry he claims an exemption from the laws of prosody. Amidst a profusion of genealogical knowledge, my kinsman could not be forgetful of his own name; and to him I am indebted for almost the whole of my information concerning the Gibbon family.[4] From this small work (a duodecimo of one hundred and sixty-five pages) the author expected

[1] ["Alike await th' inevitable hour" (Gray's *Elegy*, l. 35).]

[2] ["Learned Camden (who addicted himself to Heraldry in his latter years) was so out of conceit with their terms (being for the most part barbarous), that in his Patents (which were always Latin) when he came to the Description of the Arms themselves, he made it French" (*Introductio*, etc., Preface).]

[3] [The Prince fell at the Battle of Ligny. For Gibbon's letter to Langer and essay entitled "The Antiquities of the House of Brunswick," see *Misc. Works*, iii., 351.]

[4] Mr. Gibbon seems, after this was written, to have collected much additional information respecting his family; as appears from a number of manuscripts in my possession.—SHEFFIELD.

immortal fame, and at the conclusion of his labour he sings, in a strain of self-exultation :—

> Usque huc corrigitur Romana Blasonia per me ;
> Verborumque dehinc barbara forma cadat.
> Hic liber, in meritum si forsitan incidet usum,
> Testis rite meae sedulitatis erit.
> Quicquid agat Zoilus, ventura fatebitur aetas
> Artis quod fueram non Clypearis inops.

Such are the hopes of authors ! In the failure of those hopes John Gibbon has not been the first of his profession, and very possibly may not be the last of his name. His brother Matthew Gibbon, the draper, had one daughter and two sons—my grandfather Edward, who was born in the year 1666, and Thomas, afterwards Dean of Carlisle. According to the mercantile creed, that the best book is a profitable ledger, the writings of John the herald would be much less precious than those of his nephew Edward : but an author professes at least to write for the public benefit ; and the slow balance of trade can be pleasing to those persons only to whom it is advantageous. The successful industry of my grandfather raised him above the level of his immediate ancestors ; he appears to have launched into various and extensive dealings : even his opinions were subordinate to his interest ; and I find him in Flanders clothing King William's troops, while he would have contracted with more pleasure, though not perhaps at a cheaper rate, for the service of King James. During his residence abroad his concerns at home were managed by his mother Hester, an active and notable[1] woman. Her second husband was a widower of the name of Acton : they united the children of their first

[1] [Johnson defines *notable*, used in this sense, as "careful, bustling". *The Spectator* (No. 150), writing of men of business, says: "I have heard my father say that a broad-brimmed hat, short hair, and unfolded handkerchief, were in his time absolutely necessary to denote a NOTABLE MAN". Lamb, in his *Essays of Elia*, ed. 1889, p. 75, says that "the wife of a schoolmaster ought to be a busy, notable creature". See also Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i., 249, for Sir Joshua's "hearty laugh" at hearing Goldsmith described as "a notable man".]

nuptials. After his[1] marriage with the daughter of Richard Acton, goldsmith in Leadenhall-street, he gave his own sister to Sir Whitmore Acton, of Aldenham; and I am thus connected, by a triple alliance, with that ancient and loyal family of Shropshire baronets. It consisted about that time of seven brothers, all of gigantic stature; one of whom, a pigmy of six feet two inches, confessed himself the last and least of the seven; adding, in the true spirit of party, that such men were not born since the Revolution. Under the Tory administration of the four last years of Queen Anne (1710-1714) Mr. Edward Gibbon was appointed one of the Commissioners of the Customs; he sat at that board with Prior[2]; but the merchant was better qualified for his station than the poet; since Lord Bolingbroke has been heard to declare that he had never conversed with a man who more clearly understood the commerce and finances of England.[3] In the year 1716 he was elected one of the Directors of the South Sea Company; and his books exhibited the proof that, before his acceptance of this fatal office, he had acquired an independent fortune of sixty thousand pounds.

But his fortune was overwhelmed in the shipwreck of the year twenty, and the labours of thirty years were blasted in a single day. Of the use or abuse of the South Sea scheme, of the guilt or innocence of my grandfather and his brother Directors, I am neither a competent nor a disinterested judge. Yet the equity of modern times must condemn the violent and arbitrary proceedings, which would have disgraced the cause of justice, and would render injustice still more odious. No sooner had the nation awakened from its golden dream

[1] ["His" should refer to Acton the widower. It does refer, of course, to Gibbon's grandfather.]

[2] [Prior was appointed Commissioner in January, 1711-12 (Swift's *Journal to Stella*, Jan. 18, 31, 1711-12).]

[3] [Bolingbroke, urging Queen Anne to make Prior one of the plenipotentiaries for signing the Peace of Utrecht, wrote of him: "He is the best versed in matters of trade of all your Majesty's servants who have been trusted in this secret" (Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, viii., 6). Prior, in earlier years, had been a Commissioner of Trade, as Gibbon the historian was nearly eighty years later (*post*, p. 207).]

than a popular and even a Parliamentary clamour demanded their victims : but it was acknowledged on all sides that the South Sea Directors, however guilty, could not be touched by any known laws of the land. The speech of Lord Molesworth, the author of the State of Denmark,[1] may show the temper, or rather the intemperance, of the House of Commons. "Extraordinary crimes (exclaimed that ardent Whig) call aloud for extraordinary remedies. The Roman lawgivers had not foreseen the possible existence of a parricide ; but as soon as the first monster appeared he was sewn in a sack and cast headlong into the river ; and I shall be content to inflict the same treatment on the authors of our present ruin."[2] His motion was not literally adopted ; but a bill of pains and penalties was introduced, a retroactive statute, to punish the offences, which did not exist at the time they were committed. Such a pernicious violation of liberty and law can be excused only by the most imperious necessity ; nor could it be defended on this occasion by the plea of impending danger or useful example. The Legislature restrained the persons of the Directors, imposed an exorbitant security for their appearance, and marked their characters with a previous note of ignominy : they were compelled to deliver, upon oath, the strict value of their estates ; and were disabled from making any transfer or alienation of any part of their property.[3] Against a bill of pains and penalties it is the common right of every subject to

[1] ["In 1694 Molesworth published his *Account of Denmark*, in which he treats the Danes and their monarch with great contempt ; and takes the opportunity of insinuating those wild principles by which he supposes liberty to be established, and by which his adversaries suspect that all subordination and government is endangered" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 384). Steele, in *The Plebeian*, No. 1, said of it : "Nothing can be better writ, or more instructive to any one that values liberty. . . . I wish gentlemen would see there how Commoners were treated by the nobility, when they had the power over them" (Addison's *Works*, ed. 1856, v., 245).]

[2] [*Parl. Hist.*, vii., 683.]

[3] [T. Brodrick wrote to his brother, Lord Chancellor (Ireland) Middleton, on January 19, 1720-21 : "The directors had the assurance to petition to be heard by counsel against the bill, which was rejected with the utmost indignation, although supported by some of our great men (which, by the way, was very ill relished), not only in favour of the directors, but on account of justice, for that no criminal (how great soever) ought to be condemned unheard" (Coxe's *Walpole*, ii., 205).]

be heard by his counsel at the bar: they prayed to be heard; their prayer was refused; and their oppressors, who required no evidence, would listen to no defence. It had been at first proposed that one-eighth of their respective estates should be allowed for the future support of the Directors; but it was speciously urged, that in the various shades of opulence and guilt such an unequal proportion would be too light for many, and for some might possibly be too heavy.[1] The character and conduct of each man were separately weighed; but, instead of the calm solemnity of a judicial inquiry, the fortune and honour of three and thirty Englishmen were made the topic of hasty conversation, the sport of a lawless majority; and the basest member of the committee, by a malicious word or a silent vote, might indulge his general spleen or personal animosity. Injury was aggravated by insult, and insult was embittered by pleasantry. Allowances of twenty pounds, or one shilling, were facetiously moved.[2] A vague report that a Director had formerly been concerned in *another* project, by which some unknown persons had lost their money, was admitted as a proof of his actual guilt.[3] One man was ruined because he had dropped a foolish speech, that his horse should feed upon gold[4]; another because he was grown so proud, that, one day at the Treasury, he had refused a civil answer to persons much above him.[5] All were

[1] [*Parl. Hist.*, vii., 800.]

[2] ["May 25, 1721. There was a long debate about Sir John Blunt; Mr. Laurence Carter moved to allow him only 1s." He was allowed £1,000 (*ib.*, pp. 801-2).]

[3] ["Mr. Robert Walpole showed that Sir John Blunt was a projector of many years' standing, and had been the author of several fallacious schemes by which unwary persons had been drawn in to their utter ruin" (*ib.*, p. 801).]

[4] ["Mr. Arthur Moore moved to allow Mr. Grigsby £10,000; but another member said that since that upstart was once so prodigally vain as to bid his coachman feed his horses with gold, no doubt but he could feed on it himself; and therefore he moved that he might be allowed as much gold as he could eat. After this, a motion being made for allowing him £2,000, it was carried without a division" (*ib.*, p. 832).]

[5] ["Mr. Sloper instanced in Sir John Blunt's behaviour one day at the Treasury, of which he was himself witness, when a relation of a great man asking Sir John for a subscription, the upstart knight, with a great deal of contempt, bid him go to his cousin Walpole, and desire him to sell his stock in the bank, and by that means he might be supplied" (*ib.*, p. 801).]

condemned, absent and unheard, in arbitrary fines and forfeitures, which swept away the greatest part of their substance. Such bold oppression can scarcely be shielded by the omnipotence of parliament; and yet it may be seriously questioned whether the judges of the South Sea Directors were the true and legal representatives of their country. The first Parliament of George the First had been chosen (1715) for three years: the term had elapsed, the trust was expired; and the four additional years (1718-1722), during which they continued to sit, were derived not from the people, but from themselves; from the strong measure of the Septennial Bill, which can only be paralleled by *il serar di consiglio* of the Venetian history.[1] Yet candour will own that to the same Parliament every Englishman is deeply indebted: the Septennial Act, so vicious in its origin, has been sanctioned by time, experience, and the national consent. Its first operation secured the House of Hanover on the throne, and its permanent influence maintains the peace and stability of government. As often as a repeal has been moved in the House of Commons I have given in its defence a clear and conscientious vote.[2]

My grandfather could not expect to be treated with more lenity than his companions. His Tory principles and connections rendered him obnoxious to the ruling powers: his name is reported in a suspicious secret[3]; and his well-known

[1] ["The twelfth century produced the first rudiments of the wise and jealous aristocracy which has reduced the Doge to a pageant and the people to a cipher" (*The Decline*, vi., 382). By a decree of 1297 the admission into the great Council was almost entirely confined to those who had sat in it in the last four years and their descendants. "This law is become a marked epoch in Venetian history by the name of 'La Serrata del maggior Consiglio,' the shutting up of the Great Council" (*Penny Cyclo.*, xxvi., 238).]

[2] [The following is a list of the motions for repeal recorded in the *Parl. Hist.* during the time Gibbon was a member:—

Feb. 1, 1775. Lost by 195 to 100 (*Parl. Hist.*, xviii., 216).
March 6, 1776. Lost by 138 to 64 (*ib.*, p. 1237).
March 11, 1778. Lost by 83 to 32 (*ib.*, xix., 873).
May 8, 1780. Lost by 182 to 90 (*ib.*, xxi., 594). In this debate Burke spoke against the motion.
May 17, 1782. Lost by 149 to 61 (*ib.*, xxiii., 48). Fox and Pitt spoke for the motion; Burke against it.
May 16, 1783. Lost by 121 to 56 (*ib.*, p. 896).]

[3] [In this strange piece of English reference seems to be made to a passage in the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, where it is stated,

abilities could not plead the excuse of ignorance or error. In the first proceedings against the South Sea Directors, Mr. Gibbon is one of the few who were taken into custody[1]; and, in the final sentence, the measure of his fine proclaims him eminently guilty. The total estimate which he delivered on oath to the House of Commons amounted to one hundred and six thousand five hundred and forty-three pounds five shillings and sixpence, exclusive of antecedent settlements.[2] Two different allowances of fifteen and of ten thousand pounds were moved for Mr. Gibbon; but, on the question being put, it was carried without a division for the smaller sum.[3] On these ruins, with the skill and credit, of which parliament had not been able to despoil him, my grandfather at a mature age erected the edifice of a new fortune; the labours of sixteen years were amply rewarded; and I have reason to believe that the second structure was not much inferior to the first. He had realized a very considerable property in Sussex, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire and the New River Company; and had acquired a spacious house,[4] with gardens and lands, at Putney, in Surry, where he resided in decent hospitality.[5]

that "the Directors to whom the secret management was principally intrusted had disposed of a fictitious stock of £574,000". Mr. Gibbon was one of the number. (*Ib.*, vii., 712.)]

[1] [He and four other Directors, after being examined before a committee of the House of Lords, "were ordered into the custody of the Black Rod" (*ib.*, vii., 702).]

[2] [Gibbon, as is shown by passages in the Memoirs omitted by Lord Sheffield, knew that his grandfather had "found means to elude the impending stroke by previous settlements and secret conveyance" (*Auto.*, pp. 16, 109, 215, 391).]

[3] [*Parl. Hist.*, vii., 827. Nine of the Directors were allowed a still smaller fraction of their property. One, Hawes, whose estimate of his property was £40,031, retained only £31 (*ib.*, p. 834). "The estates of the Directors were valued at £2,014,100; the allowance made to them was £354,600" (Coxe's *Walpole*, i., 150).]

[4] Since inhabited by Mr. Wood, Sir John Shelley, the Duke of Norfolk, etc.—SHEFFIELD.

[In Dodsley's *London*, etc., v., 235 (ed. 1761), Putney is described as being "five miles south-west of London. About this village the citizens of London have many pretty seats; and on Putney Heath is a public house noted for polite assemblies, and in the summer season for breakfasting and dancing, and for one of the pleasantest bowling-greens in England."]

[5] [*Decently* Johnson defines as "without meanness or ostentation". It is in this sense that Gibbon describes his grandfather's hospitality.]

He died in December, 1736, at the age of seventy ; and by his last will, at the expense of Edward, his only son (with whose marriage he was not perfectly reconciled,[1]) enriched his two daughters, Catherine and Hester. The former became the wife of Mr. Edward Elliston, an East India captain: their daughter and heiress Catherine was married in the year 1756 to Edward Eliot, Esq. (now Lord Eliot), of Port Eliot, in the county of Cornwall[2]; and their three sons are my nearest male relations on the father's side. A life of devotion and celibacy was the choice of my aunt, Mrs. Hester Gibbon, who, at the age of eighty-five, still resides in a hermitage at Cliffe, in Northamptonshire[3]; having long survived her spiritual guide and faithful companion Mr. William Law, who, at an advanced age, about the year 1761, died in her house.[4] In our family he had left the reputation of a worthy and pious man, who believed all that he professed, and practised all that he enjoined. The character of a non-juror, which he maintained to the last, is a sufficient evidence of his principles in church and state; and the sacrifice of interest to conscience will be always respectable.[5] His theological writings, which our domestic connection has tempted me to peruse, preserve an imperfect sort of life, and I can pronounce with more

[1] [It was no doubt "the doubtful credit" of the father of his son's wife, which was to end in a bankruptcy (*post*, p. 37), that displeased the old man. See *Auto.*, p. 111.]

[2] [He gave Gibbon his seat in Parliament. *Post*, p. 191. He was great-great-grandson of Sir John Eliot, who died in the Tower, a victim to the lawlessness of Charles I. He was raised to the peerage in January, 1784. The second Baron was created Earl of St. Germains in 1815, dropping in this title his great inheritance in the name of Eliot. For Eliot as "*a young Lord*" see Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 334.]

[3] [Gibbon grew impatient of the prolonged life of "the Northamptonshire Saint". On Feb. 4, 1789, he asked Lord Sheffield to apply to Lord Spencer "to find a correspondent in that neighbourhood, who, without noise or scandal, might send you regular and early notice of her decline and fall" (*Corres.*, ii., 187). Four months later he wrote: "The Saint seems ripe for heaven" (*ib.*, p. 193). For her will see *ib.*, p. 218.]

[4] [It was in his own house that he died; "it did not become Miss Gibbon's until after his death, when she received it as a bequest; or rather a trust, from him". Cliffe, or King's Cliffe, as it is properly called, was his native village. There he was born in 1686, and thither he retired in 1740 (Overton's *Law*, pp. 5, 222, 351, 446).]

[5] [For William Law and his writings see Appendix 2.]

confidence and knowledge on the merits of the author. His last compositions are darkly tinctured by the incomprehensible visions of Jacob Behmen[1]; and his discourse on the absolute unlawfulness of stage entertainments is sometimes quoted for a ridiculous intemperance of sentiment and language.—"The actors and spectators must all be damned: the playhouse is the porch of Hell, the place of the Devil's abode, where he holds his filthy court of evil spirits: a play is the Devil's triumph, a sacrifice performed to his glory, as much as in the heathen temples of Bacchus or Venus, etc., etc." But these sallies of religious frenzy must not extinguish the praise, which is due to Mr. William Law as a wit and a scholar. His argument on topics of less absurdity is specious and acute, his manner is lively, his style forcible and clear; and, had not his vigorous mind been clouded by enthusiasm,[2] he might be ranked with the most agreeable and ingenious writers of the times. While the Bangorian controversy was a fashionable theme, he entered the lists on the subject of Christ's kingdom, and the authority of the priesthood: against the plain account

[1] ["Law (said Dr. Johnson) fell latterly into the reveries of Jacob Behmen, whom Law alleged to have been somewhat in the same state with St. Paul, and to have seen *unutterable things*. Were it even so (said Johnson), Jacob would have resembled St. Paul still more, by not attempting to utter them" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 122). See *ib.*, *n.* 6, for Behmen or Böhme, the mystic shoemaker of Gorlitz, who was born in 1575 and died in 1624.]

[2] [Johnson defines *enthusiasm* as "a vain belief of private revelation; a vain confidence of divine favour or communication". Sprat, in 1667, in his *History of the Royal Society*, ed. 1734, p. 53, speaking of the meetings of learned men in the lodgings of the Warden of Wadham College, Oxford, during the Commonwealth, says that "the minds of young men, receiving from them first impressions of sober and generous knowledge, were invincibly armed against all the enchantments of enthusiasm". South describes "enthusiasm" as "that pestilent and vile thing, which, wheresoever it has had its full course, has thrown both Church and State into confusion" (*Sermons*, iv., 41). Dennis, in 1696, dedicating his *Letters upon Several Occasions* to Charles Montague, wrote: "The enthusiast, the quack, the pettifogger are rewarded for torturing and deluding man". Bishop Hurd, in 1752, published a sermon on *The Mischiefs of Enthusiasm and Bigotry*. Adam Smith, in 1776, in the *Wealth of Nations*, ed. 1811, iii., p. 216, says, "Science is the great antidote to the poison of enthusiasm and superstition". Gibbon wrote in 1779: "If Eusebius had shown that the virtues of the confessors were tinctured with pride and obstinacy, and that their lively faith was not exempt from some mixture of enthusiasm, he would have armed his readers against the excessive veneration for those holy men which imperceptibly degenerated into religious worship" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 633). See *post*, p. 147; and also p. 163, where he uses the word in the more modern sense.]

of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper he resumed the combat with Bishop Hoadley, the object of Whig idolatry, and Tory abhorrence; and at every weapon of attack and defence the non-juror, on the ground which is common to both, approves himself at least equal to the prelate. On the appearance of the Fable of the Bees, he drew his pen against the licentious doctrine that private vices are public benefits, and morality as well as religion must join in his applause. Mr. Law's master-work, the *Serious Call*, is still read as a popular and powerful book of devotion. His precepts are rigid, but they are founded on the gospel[1]; his satire is sharp, but it is drawn from the knowledge of human life; and many of his portraits are not unworthy of the pen of La Bruyère. If he finds a spark of piety in his reader's mind, he will soon kindle it to a flame[2]; and a philosopher must allow that he exposes, with equal severity and truth, the strange contradiction between the faith and practice of the Christian world. Under the names of Flavia and Miranda he has admirably described my two aunts—the heathen and the Christian sister.

My father, Edward Gibbon, was born in October, 1707: at the age of thirteen he could scarcely feel that he was disinherited by act of parliament; and, as he advanced towards manhood, new prospects of fortune opened to his view. A parent is most attentive to supply in his children the deficiencies, of which he is conscious in himself: my grandfather's knowledge was derived from a strong understanding and the experience of the ways of men; but my father enjoyed the benefits of a liberal education as a scholar and a gentleman. At Westminster School, and afterwards at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, he passed through a regular course of academical discipline; and the care of his learning and morals was intrusted to his private tutor, the same Mr.

[1] [Gibbon does not praise Law for adhering to the Gospel, but attacks the Gospel for justifying Law's precepts. "The Ascetics, who obeyed and abused the rigid precepts of the Gospel, were inspired by the savage enthusiasm which represents man as a criminal, and God as a tyrant" (*The Decline*, iv., 57).]

[2] ["Hell-fire is darted from every page of it" (*Auto.*, p. 26).]

William Law.[1] But the mind of a saint[2] is above or below the present world; and while the pupil proceeded on his travels, the tutor remained at Putney, the much-honoured friend and spiritual director of the whole family.[3] My father resided some time at Paris to acquire the fashionable exercises; and as his temper was warm and social, he indulged in those pleasures, for which the strictness of his former education had given him a keener relish. He afterwards visited several provinces of France; but his excursions were neither long nor remote; and the slender knowledge, which he had gained of the French language, was gradually obliterated. His passage through Besançon is marked by a singular consequence in the chain of human events. In a dangerous illness Mr. Gibbon was attended, at his own request, by one of his kinsmen of the name of Acton,[4] the younger brother of a younger brother, who had applied himself to the study of physic. During the slow recovery of his patient, the physician himself was attacked by the malady of love: he married his mistress, renounced his country and religion, settled at Besançon, and became the father of three sons; the eldest of whom, General Acton, is conspicuous in Europe as the principal Minister of the King

[1] [Law had been a Fellow of the College. John Byrom (*Remains*, i., 422) records how one evening in 1730, going to give Gibbon's father a lesson in shorthand at Cambridge, he found that "he had been playing at quadrille, had writ a little, but very ill; for he makes his letters wretchedly, but reads pretty well. Mr. Law came in while we were at it and sat with us. . . . We had a bottle of wine, he drank none, I think, I two or three glasses." The next day Byrom recorded: "Gibbon had done nothing; what a pity he should be so slow, for Law's sake!"]

[2] [See *post*, pp. 69, *n.*, 71, *n.*]

[3] ["March 4, 1729. We went to the Bull Inn, Putney, and sent to Mr. Law that we should wait on him in the afternoon; while we were eating a mutton chop Mr. Law came to us, and we went with him to Mr. Gibbon's, where we walked in the gardens and upstairs into some rooms, the library, and then we sat in a parlour below with Mr. Law and young G., who left us after a little while over a bottle of French wine" (*Remains of John Byrom*, i., 337).

If Miranda was Hester Gibbon the family did not obey their director, for we are told of her that "whilst she was under her mother, she was forced to go patched, and loaded with a burden of fineries to the holy Sacrament; to hear profaneness at the play-house, and wanton songs and love intrigues at the opera; to dance at public places, that fops and rakes might admire the fineness of her shape, and the beauty of her motions" (*The Serious Call*, ch. viii.).]

[4] [See Appendix 3.]

of the Two Sicilies. By an uncle whom another stroke of fortune had transplanted to Leghorn, he was educated in the naval service of the Emperor; and his valour and conduct in the command of the Tuscan frigates protected the retreat of the Spaniards from Algiers.[1] On my father's return to England he was chosen, in the general election of 1734, to serve in parliament for the borough of Petersfield, a burgage tenure, of which my grandfather possessed a weighty share, till he alienated (I know not why) such important property.[2] In the opposition to Sir Robert Walpole, and the Pelhams, prejudice and society connected his son with the Tories,—shall I say Jacobites?[3] or, as they were pleased to style themselves, the country gentlemen? with them he gave many a vote; with them he drank many a bottle.[4] Without acquiring

[1] [In the *Annual Register*, xviii., 1, 142, an account is given of the Spanish attack on Algiers in 1775, "with a force that, in its modern state of barbarism and imbecility, seemed sufficient to overwhelm all Africa. . . . This expedition must be ranked amongst the most disgraceful in its event, as well as the most formidable in its preparations of any in the present age" (*ib.*, pp. 144, 146. See also *Gent. Mag.*, xlv., 405).

Smollett (*Hist. Eng.*, ed. 1800, iii., 273), writing of the year 1748, says: "All the powers that border on the Mediterranean, except France and Tuscany, are at perpetual war with the Moors of Barbary, and for that reason obliged to employ foreign ships for the transportation of their merchandise. . . . The Maritime Powers, for this puny advantage, not only tolerate the piratical states, but even supply them with arms and ammunition, solicit their passes, and purchase their forbearance with annual presents, which are, in effect, equal to a tribute."

In 1816 an English fleet, under Lord Exmouth, bombarded Algiers, and released more than 1,000 Christian slaves (Martineau's *Thirty Years' Peace*, ed. 1849, i., 62). In 1830 the French permanently occupied the town.]

[2] [See Appendix 4.]

[3] [Lord Hervey (*Memoirs*, i., 5), writing of the year 1727, says that "the Tories were divided into Jacobites and what were called Hanover Tories". Lord Bolingbroke complained in 1733 (*Works*, iii., 28) that the writers on the side of the ministry "frequently throw out that every man is a friend to the Pretender who is not a friend to Walpole". Churchill, in his *Prophecy of Famine* (1763), writes of—

> "The old adherents of the Stuart race,
> Who, pointed out no matter by what name,
> Tories or Jacobites, are still the same".
>
> (*Poems*, ed. 1766, i., 123.)]

[4] [Swift, in his *Journal to Stella*, describes on Feb. 18, 1710-11, "the October Club; that is a set of above a hundred parliament men of the country who drink October beer at home, and meet every evening at a tavern near the parliament, to consult affairs, and drive things on to extremes against the Whigs to call the old ministry to account, and get off five or six heads".

the fame of an orator or a statesman, he eagerly joined in the great opposition, which, after a seven years' chase, hunted down Sir Robert Walpole: and in the pursuit of an unpopular minister, he gratified a private revenge against the oppressor of his family in the South Sea persecution.[1]

I was born at Putney, in the county of Surry, the 27th of April, O.S.,[2] in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven; the first child of the marriage of Edward Gibbon, esq., and of Judith Porten.[3] My lot might have been that of a slave, a savage, or a peasant; nor can I reflect without pleasure on the bounty of Nature, which cast my birth in a free and civilized country, in an age of science and philosophy, in a family of honourable rank, and decently endowed with the gifts of fortune.[4] From my birth I have enjoyed the right

Fielding nearly forty years later took off these country gentlemen in Squire Western: "'Pox! the world is come to a fine pass indeed, if we are all fools, except a parcel of roundheads and Hanover rats. Pox! I hope the times are a coming that we shall make fools of them, and every man shall enjoy his own. . . . I hope to zee it, sister, before the Hanover rats have eat up all our corn, and left us nothing but turnips to feed upon.'—'I protest, brother,' cries she, 'you are now got beyond my understanding. Your jargon of turnips and Hanover rats is to me perfectly unintelligible.'—'I believe,' cries he, 'you don't care to hear o' em; but the country interest may succeed one day or other for all that'" (*Tom Jones*, bk. vi., ch. 14).]

[1] [Walpole not only opposed the unjust measures of the prosecution, but was inclined to leniency (Coxe's *Walpole*, i., 148, 151).]

[2] [Gibbon kept his birthday on May 8, N.S. (*post*, p. 229). The loss of the eleven days on the alteration of the style in September, 1752, caused him great surprise (*Auto.*, p. 79). Johnson recorded in his Diary: "Jan. 1, 1753, N.S., which I shall use for the future" (*Johnsonian Misc.*, i., 13).]

[3] The union to which I owe my birth was a marriage of inclination and esteem. Mr. James Porten, a merchant of London, resided with his family at Putney, in a house adjoining to the bridge and churchyard, where I have passed many happy hours of my childhood. He left one son (the late Sir Stanier Porten) and three daughters; Catherine, who preserved her maiden name, and of whom I shall hereafter speak; another daughter married Mr. Darrel of Richmond, and left two sons, Edward and Robert: the youngest of the three sisters was Judith, my mother.—GIBBON.

["June 3, 1736. Edward Gibbon Esq. of Putney, Member of Parl. for Petersfield, to Miss Porteen" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1736, p. 355).

"April 27, 1737. The Lady of Edw. Gibbon Esq., Member for Petersfield, of a son" (*ib.*, 1737, p. 252).

Sir Stanier Porten was Under-Secretary of State in 1776 (*Corres.*, i., 298). His two children inherited most of Gibbon's property. Edward Darell was one of Gibbon's executors (*post*, p. 268).]

[4] [*Post*, p. 239.]

of primogeniture,[1] but I was succeeded by five brothers and one sister, all of whom were snatched away in their infancy. My five brothers, whose names may be found in the parish register of Putney, I shall not pretend to lament;[2] but from my childhood to the present hour I have deeply and sincerely regretted my sister, whose life was somewhat prolonged, and whom I remember to have seen an amiable infant. The relation of a brother and a sister, especially if they do not marry, appears to me of a very singular nature. It is a familiar and tender friendship with a female, much about our own age; an affection perhaps softened by the secret influence of sex, but pure from any mixture of sensual desire, and the sole species of Platonic love that can be indulged in with truth, and without danger.[3]

At the general election of 1741, Mr. Gibbon and Mr. Delmé stood an expensive and successful contest at Southampton, against Mr. Dummer and Mr. Henly, afterwards Lord Chancellor and Earl of Northington.[4] The Whig candidates had a majority of the resident voters; but the corporation was firm in the Tory interest: a sudden creation of one hundred

[1] ["The insolent prerogative of primogeniture was unknown" to the Romans (*The Decline*, iv., 488). "The frequent partitions among brothers had almost ruined the princely houses of Germany, till that just but pernicious law was slowly superseded by the right of primogeniture" (*ib.*, vi., 494).]

[2] [Had they lived, their shares of their father's fortune, younger children though they were, "would have been sufficient," he writes, "to oppress my inheritance" (*Auto.*, p. 28).

The first six children born to Sir Walter Scott's parents "all perished in infancy" (Lockhart's *Scott*, ed. 1839, i., 108).]

[3] ["I, who have no sisters nor brothers," wrote Johnson, "look with some degree of innocent envy on those who may be said to be born to be friends" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 324).]

[4] [Horace Walpole wrote of Lord Northington on Dec. 29, 1763: "The Chancellor is chosen a governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital: a smart gentleman, who was sent with the staff, carried it in the evening, when the Chancellor happened to be drunk. 'Well, Mr. Bartlemy,' said his lordship, snuffing, 'what have you to say?' The man, who had prepared a formal harangue, was transported to have so fair an opportunity given him of uttering it, and with much dapper gesticulation congratulated his lordship on his health, and the nation on enjoying such great abilities. The Chancellor stopped him short, crying, 'By God, it is a lie! I have neither health nor abilities; my bad health has destroyed my abilities" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 154). When, a little later, Northington was made President of the Council, Walpole wrote: "He is never sober after dinner, and causes are only heard before the Council in the afternoon" (*ib.*, v., 8).]

and seventy new freemen turned the scale; and a supply was readily obtained of respectable volunteers, who flocked from all parts of England to support the cause of their political friends. The new parliament opened with the victory of an opposition, which was fortified by strong clamour and strange coalitions. From the event of the first divisions, Sir Robert Walpole perceived that he could no longer lead a majority in the House of Commons, and prudently resigned (after a dominion of one-and-twenty years) the guidance of the state (1742). But the fall of an unpopular minister was not succeeded, according to general expectation, by a millennium of happiness and virtue; some courtiers lost their places, some patriots lost their characters,[1] Lord Orford's [2] offences vanished with his power; and after a short vibration, the Pelham government was fixed on the old basis of the Whig aristocracy. In the year 1745, the throne and the constitution were attacked by a rebellion, which does not reflect much honour on the national spirit; since the English friends of the Pretender wanted courage to join his standard, and his enemies (the bulk of the people) allowed him to advance into the heart of the kingdom.[3] Without daring, perhaps without desiring, to aid the rebels, my father invariably adhered to the Tory opposition. In the most critical season he accepted, for the

[1] [Pope, in the fragment of a satire entitled "One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty," thus attacked Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath, the leader of the "patriots":—

"Thro' clouds of passion P——'s views are clear,
He foams a patriot to subside a peer;
Impatient sees his country bought and sold,
And damns the market where he takes no gold".

(Warton's *Pope's Works*, iv., 347; see also Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 239.)]

[2] [In Feb., 1742, Walpole was made Earl of Orford.]

[3] [When Johnson and Boswell were driving to Derby in 1777, "I observed," writes Boswell, "that we were this day to stop just where the Highland army did in 1745". "It was a noble attempt," answered Johnson (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 162). Smollett tells how the English Jacobites "were elevated to an insolence of hope which they were at no pains to conceal". Nevertheless, "except a few that joined the Prince at Manchester, not a soul appeared in his behalf; one would have imagined that all the Jacobites of England had been annihilated" (*Hist. of England*, iii., 170). Horace Walpole wrote on Dec. 9, 1745 (*Letters*, i., 410): "The rebels have got no recruits since their first entry into England, excepting one gentleman in Lancashire, one hundred and fifty common men, and two parsons at Manchester, and a physician from York".]

service of the party, the office of alderman in the city of London: but the duties were so repugnant to his inclination and habits that he resigned his gown at the end of a few months.[1] The second parliament in which he sat was prematurely dissolved (1747);[2] and as he was unable or unwilling to maintain a second contest for Southampton, the life of the senator expired in that dissolution.

The death of a new-born child before that of its parents may seem an unnatural, but it is strictly a probable, event: since of any given number the greater part are extinguished before their ninth year, before they possess the faculties of the mind or body.[3] Without accusing the profuse waste or imperfect workmanship of Nature,[4] I shall only observe, that this unfavourable chance was multiplied against my infant existence. So feeble was my constitution, so precarious my life, that, in the baptism of each of my brothers, my father's prudence successively repeated my Christian name of Edward,

[1] [He was elected Alderman of Vintry Ward in March, 1743 (*Gent. Mag.*, xiii., 163). He resigned in June, 1745 (*ib.*, xv., 333). Horace Walpole described the historian as the "son of a foolish alderman" (*Letters*, vi., 311).]

[2] [This parliament met in Dec., 1741, and was dissolved in June, 1747. Though it sat through six sessions, nevertheless between 1714 and 1780 there was only one shorter parliament—the one that after five sessions was brought to a close by the death of George I. At the prorogation in 1747 the King said: "As this parliament would necessarily determine in a short time . . . I have judged it expedient speedily to call a new parliament" (*Parl. Hist.*, xiv., 65). Horace Walpole wrote a few days later: "Lord Cornbury says the King's speech put him in mind of a gaoler in Oxfordshire who was remarkably humane to his prisoners; one day he said to one of them, 'My good friend, you know you are to be hanged on Friday se'nnight; I want extremely to go to London; would you be so kind as to be hanged next Friday?'" (Walpole's *Letters*, ii., 88).]

[3] ["On peut parier 12,245 contre 11,749 qu'un enfant qui vient de naître ne vivra pas 10 ans" (Buffon's *Hist. Nat.*, ed. 1777, supplément iv., 158).

"La moitié du genre humain périt avant l'âge de huit ans un mois, c'est à dire, avant que le corps soit développé, et avant que l'âme ne se manifeste par la raison" (*ib.*, p. 161).

In 1763 Gibbon read *A Treatise on the Number of Inhabitants in Holland and West Friesland*, by Kerseboom, where it is stated that of 1,400 new-born children "the probable number of those who will remain alive at the age of ten is 895" (*Misc. Works*, v., 413).

By Dr. W. Ogle's tables, constructed on the basis of the death-rates of 1871-80, not three-tenths of the children die before their ninth year (Whitaker's *Almanack*, 1899, p. 690. See *post*, p. 239).]

[4] ["So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life."
(*In Memoriam*, stanza liv.)]

that, in case of the departure of the eldest son, this patronymic appellation might be still perpetuated in the family.

——— Uno avulso non deficit alter.[1]

To preserve and to rear so frail a being, the most tender assiduity was scarcely sufficient, and my mother's attention was somewhat diverted by an exclusive passion for her husband, and by the dissipation of the world, in which his taste and authority obliged her to mingle. But the maternal office was supplied by my aunt, Mrs. Catherine Porten; at whose name I feel a tear of gratitude trickling down my cheek.[2] A life of celibacy transferred her vacant affection to her sister's first child: my weakness excited her pity; her attachment was fortified by labour and success: and if there be any, as I trust there are some, who rejoice that I live, to that dear and excellent woman they must hold themselves indebted. Many anxious and solitary days did she consume in the patient trial of every mode of relief and amusement. Many wakeful nights did she sit by my bedside in trembling expectation that each hour would be my last. Of the various and frequent disorders of my childhood my own recollection is dark; nor do I wish to expatiate on so disgusting a topic. Suffice it to say, that while every practitioner, from Sloane[3] and Ward to the Chevalier Taylor,[4] was successively summoned to torture

[1] ["Primo avulso, etc." (*Æneid*, vi., 143).
"The first thus rent, a second will arise" (Dryden).]

[2] [Worthy of respect as was Gibbon's emotion, nevertheless there is something a little comical when we find the same words in five of the six sketches of his Memoirs. The tear could scarcely have five times trickled down his cheek. See *Auto.*, pp. 36, 111, 219, 295, 392.]

[3] [Sir Hans Sloane, whose collection of rarities, purchased for the nation by money raised by a lottery, was part of the foundation of the British Museum. "He was first physician to George I., who created him a Baronet, and to his present Majesty [George II.]" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1753, p. 52).]

[4] ["Talking of celebrated and successful irregular practisers in physick; Dr. Johnson said, 'Taylor was the most ignorant man I ever knew; but sprightly. Ward the dullest. Taylor challenged me once to talk Latin with him; (laughing). I quoted some of Horace, which he took to be a part of my own speech. He said a few words well enough.' BEAUCLERK. 'I remember, Sir, you said that Taylor was an instance how far impudence could carry ignorance'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 389. See Horace Walpole's *Letters*, iii., 190, for his epigram on Taylor).]

or relieve me, the care of my mind was too frequently neglected for that of my health : compassion always suggested an excuse for the indulgence of the master, or the idleness of the pupil ; and the chain of my education was broken, as often as I was recalled from the school of learning to the bed of sickness.

As soon as the use of speech had prepared my infant reason for the admission of knowledge, I was taught the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic. So remote is the date, so vague is the memory of their origin in myself, that, were not the error corrected by analogy, I should be tempted to conceive them as innate. In my childhood I was praised for the readiness with which I could multiply and divide, by memory alone, two sums of several figures ; such praise encouraged my growing talent ; and had I persevered in this line of application, I might have acquired some fame in mathematical studies.[1]

After this previous institution[2] at home, or at a day school at Putney, I was delivered at the age of seven into the hands of Mr. John Kirkby, who exercised about eighteen months the office of my domestic tutor. His own words, which I shall here transcribe, inspire in his favour a sentiment of pity and esteem : "During my abode in my native county of Cumberland, in quality of an indigent curate, I used now and then in a summer, when the pleasantness of the season invited, to take a solitary walk to the sea-shore, which lies about two miles from the town where I lived. Here I would amuse myself, one while in viewing at large the agreeable prospect which surrounded me, and another while (confining my sight to nearer objects) in admiring the vast variety of beautiful shells, thrown upon the beach ; some of the choicest of which I always picked up, to divert my little ones upon my return. One time among the rest, taking such

[1] [*Post*, p. 95. Gibbon found his arithmetic useful in writing his history. "The best translators from the Greek," he wrote, "I find to be very poor arithmeticians" (*The Decline*, v., 407, *n.*). "Arithmetic is an excellent touchstone to try the amplifications of passion and rhetoric" (*ib.*, vi., 405, *n.*). See Johnson's *Letters*, ii., 321.]

[2] [Johnson gives instances of *institution* in the sense of *education*.]

a journey in my head, I sat down upon the declivity of the beach, with my face to [towards] the sea, which was now come up within a few yards of my feet; when immediately the sad thoughts of the wretched condition of my family, and the unsuccessfulness of all endeavours to amend it, came crowding into my mind, which drove me into a deep melancholy, and ever and anon forced tears from my eyes."[1] Distress at last forced him to leave the country. His learning and virtue introduced him to my father; and at Putney he might have found at least a temporary shelter, had not an act of indiscretion driven him into the world. One day reading prayers in the parish church, he most unluckily forgot the name of King George[2]: his patron, a loyal subject, dismissed him with some reluctance, and a decent reward[3]; and *how* the poor man ended his days I have never been able to learn.[4] Mr. John Kirkby is the author of two small volumes; Life of Automathes (London, 1745[5]), and an English and Latin Grammar (London, 1746); which, as a testimony of gratitude, he dedicated (Nov. 5th, 1745) to my father.[6] The books are before

[1] [*Automathes*, p. 1.]

[2] [In the family of Gibbon's grandfather the name of the King was always omitted in family prayers (*Auto.*, p. 17).]

[3] [Gibbon says that Kirkby was guilty of a "public refusal to name King George" (*ib.*, p. 221). If that were the case Mr. Gibbon could scarcely have retained him in his family. Swift's friend, Dr. Sheridan, the grandfather of R. B. Sheridan, lost preferment by selecting through inadvertence, as the text for a sermon on the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" (Swift's *Works*, ed. 1883, i., 290).]

[4] [He died in 1754. According to the *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, in 1739 he had been made Vicar of Waldershare, and in 1741, Rector of Blackmanstone. The vicarage in 1835 was worth £133, but the rectory only £44. There were but five inhabitants and the church was "desecrated" (Lewis's *Top. Dict.*).]

[5] [*The Capacity and Extent of the Human Understanding Exemplified in the Extraordinary Case of* AUTOMATHES, A YOUNG NOBLEMAN, *who was accidentally left in his infancy upon a desolate Island and continued nineteen years in that solitary State separate from all Human Society.* It was reprinted in Weber's *Popular Romances*, Edin., 1812. See *Notes and Queries*, 6 s., xii., 68, 177.]

[6] [Mr. G. K. Fortescue informs me that "no copy of this book is to be found in the catalogues of the British Museum, Bodleian, Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, Trinity College Library, Dublin. It is mentioned in Lowndes' *Biographer's Manual* apparently only on the strength of Gibbon's allusion to it. It is not in Watt's *Bibliotheca Britannica*, either in the author or in the subject volume. It does not appear in *Book Prices Current*—a list of all books sold by public auction since Dec., 1886, nor is it in Quaritch's *Catalogues* or that of any other bookseller, so far as I have been able to see."]

me: from them the pupil may judge the preceptor; and, upon the whole, his judgment will not be unfavourable. The grammar is executed with accuracy and skill, and I know not whether any better existed at the time in our language: but the Life of Automathes aspires to the honours of a philosophical fiction. It is the story of a youth, the son of a shipwrecked exile, who lives alone on a desert island from infancy to the age of manhood. A hind is his nurse; he inherits a cottage, with many useful and curious instruments; some ideas remain of the education of his two first years; some arts are borrowed from the beavers of a neighbouring lake; some truths are revealed in supernatural visions. With these helps, and his own industry, Automathes becomes a self-taught though speechless philosopher, who had investigated with success his own mind, the natural world, the abstract sciences, and the great principles of morality and religion. The author is not entitled to the merit of invention, since he has blended the English story of Robinson Crusoe with the Arabian romance of Hai Ebn Yokhdan, which he might have read in the Latin version of Pocock.[1] In the Automathes I cannot praise either the depth of thought or elegance of style; but the book is not devoid of entertainment or instruction; and among several interesting passages, I would select the discovery of fire, which produces by accidental mischief the discovery of conscience.[2] A man who had thought so much on the subjects of language and education was surely no ordinary preceptor: my childish years, and his hasty departure, prevented me from enjoying the full benefit of his

[1] [I owe the following note to Professor Margoliouth: "The story of Hagy Ibn Yakzan is a philosophical work, of which the purport is to show how a child left on a desert island, by observing the phenomena of nature, could arrive at the true religion. It was edited with translation by Pocock's son, with the title of *Philosophus Autodidactus*, Oxford, 1671—of course in Latin."

Gibbon described it as "a fine, though irregular production of Arabian genius and philosophy" (*Misc. Works*, v., 234).]

[2] [The axe with which he cut down an old tree struck out sparks on a stone, and so set the chips alight. The next day he repeated the experiment; the fire spread, and destroyed beasts and fowls. "With what horror was I seized! . . . This accident gave me the first sad experience of the severe lashes of a *self-condemning conscience*" (p. 187).]

lessons; but they enlarged my knowledge of arithmetic, and left me a clear impression of the English and Latin rudiments.

In my ninth year (January, 1746), in a lucid interval[1] of comparative health, my father adopted the convenient and customary mode of English education; and I was sent to Kingston-upon-Thames, to a school of about seventy boys, which was kept by Dr. Wooddeson and his assistants. Every time I have since passed over Putney Common, I have always noticed the spot where my mother, as we drove along in the coach, admonished me that I was now going into the world, and must learn to think and act for myself. The expression may appear ludicrous; yet there is not, in the course of life, a more remarkable change than the removal of a child from the luxury and freedom of a wealthy house, to the frugal diet and strict subordination of a school; from the tenderness of parents, and the obsequiousness of servants, to the rude familiarity of his equals, the insolent tyranny of his seniors, and the rod, perhaps, of a cruel and capricious pedagogue.[2] Such hardships may steel the mind and body against the injuries of fortune; but my timid reserve was astonished by the crowd and tumult of the school; the want of strength and activity disqualified me for the sports of the play-field; nor have I forgotten how often in the year forty-six I was reviled and buffeted for the sins of my Tory ancestors.[3] By

[1] ["The long dissensions of the two Houses had had lucid intervals and happy pauses" (*History of Henry VII.*, Bacon's *Works*, ed. 1803, v., 9).

"Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through and make a lucid interval."
(Dryden, *MacFlecknoe*, l. 21.)

Gibbon may have borrowed the phrase from Johnson, who, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, written during illness, said: "I snatch every lucid interval, and animate myself with such amusements as the time offers" (Johnson's *Letters*, ii., 377).]

[2] ["With the voice of a schoolmaster, or, what is often much the same, of a tyrant" (*Tom Jones*, bk. xi., ch. 7). Fielding wrote this in 1749, three years after Gibbon went to his first school. For instances of the cruelty of schoolmasters in those days see Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 44; ii., 144, 146, 157; iii., 212.]

[3] [A writer in *The Gent. Mag.*, 1794, p. 199, who signs himself "D. P." [Daniel Prince], says, on the authority of one of Gibbon's school-fellows, that "he was a most unhealthy, weakly child when at school at Kingston".]

the common methods of discipline, at the expense of many tears and some blood, I purchased the knowledge of the Latin syntax : and not long since I was possessed of the dirty volumes of Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos, which I painfully construed and darkly understood. The choice of these authors is not injudicious. The *lives* of Cornelius Nepos, the friend of Atticus and Cicero, are composed in the style of the purest age : his simplicity is elegant, his brevity copious ; he exhibits a series of men and manners ; and with such illustrations, as every pedant is not indeed qualified to give, this classic biographer may initiate a young student in the history of Greece and Rome.[1] The use of fables or apologues has been approved in every age from ancient India to modern Europe. They convey in familiar images the truths of morality and prudence ; and the most childish understanding (I advert to the scruples of Rousseau) will not suppose either that beasts *do* speak, or that men *may* lie.[2] A fable represents the genuine characters of animals ; and a skilful master might extract from Pliny and Buffon some pleasing lessons of natural history, a science well adapted to the taste and capacity of children. The Latinity of Phædrus is not exempt from an alloy of the silver age ; but his manner is concise, terse and sententious : the Thracian slave discreetly breathes the spirit of a freeman ; and when the text is sound, the style is perspicuous. But his fables, after a long oblivion, were first published by Peter Pithou from a corrupt manuscript. The labours of fifty editors confess the defects of the

[1] [Gibbon, in 1756, wrote of Nepos : "Il excelle dans cet art, la difficulté duquel rend les bons abrégés si peu communs, celui de saisir les traits qui peignent les hommes et les événemens, et de savoir laisser à l'écart toutes les circonstances qui ne font qu'embarrasser une narration, et détourner l'attention du lecteur du principal sur l'accessoire" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 416).]

[2] ["Comment peut-on s'aveugler assez pour appeller les fables la morale des enfans? sans songer que l'apologue en les amusant les abuse, que séduits par le mensonge ils laissent échapper la vérité, et que ce qu'on fait pour leur rendre l'instruction agréable les empêche d'en profiter. Les fables peuvent instruire les hommes, mais il faut dire la vérité nue aux enfans ; sitôt qu'on la couvre d'un voile, ils ne se donnent plus la peine de le lever." Hereupon follows an analysis of La Fontaine's *Le Corbeau et le Renard*, showing how ignorant Rousseau often was of that Nature which he professed to have mastered (*Emile*, livre ii. ; *Œuvres de Rousseau*, ed. 1780, vii., 209).]

copy, as well as the value of the original; and the schoolboy may have been whipt for misapprehending a passage, which Bentley could not restore, and which Burman could not explain.[1]

My studies were too frequently interrupted by sickness; and after a real or nominal residence at Kingston school of near two years, I was finally recalled (December, 1747) by my mother's death, which was occasioned in her thirty-eighth year by the consequences of her last labour. I was too young to feel the importance of my loss; and the image of her person and conversation is faintly imprinted in my memory. The affectionate heart of my aunt, Catherine Porten, bewailed a sister and a friend; but my poor father was inconsolable, and the transport of grief seemed to threaten his life or his reason. I can never forget the scene of our first interview, some weeks after the fatal event; the awful silence, the room hung with black,[2] the mid-day tapers, his sighs and tears; his praises of my mother, a saint in heaven; his solemn adjuration that I would cherish her memory and imitate her virtues; and the fervour with which he kissed and blessed me as the sole surviving pledge of their loves. The storm of passion insensibly subsided into calmer melancholy. At a convivial meeting of his friends, Mr. Gibbon might affect or enjoy a gleam of cheerfulness; but his plan of happiness was for ever destroyed;[3] and after the loss of his companion he was left alone in a world, of which the business and pleasure were to him irksome or insipid. After some unsuccessful trials he renounced the tumult of London and the hospitality of Putney, and buried himself in

[1] [See Appendix 5.]

[2] [On Swift's death his cousin, Mrs. Whiteway, reproached his executors with not hanging the room in which he lay with black (Swift's *Works*, ed. 1883, i., 426).]

[3] [Swift wrote to a friend who had lost his wife: "Such misfortunes seem to break the whole scheme of man's life" (*ib.*, xvii., 201). Johnson wrote to Mrs. Thrale on the death of her only son: "I know that a whole system of hopes, and designs, and expectations is swept away at once" (Johnson's *Letters*, i., 383). To a friend he wrote on the loss of his wife: "A loss such as yours . . . breaks the whole system of purposes and hopes" (*ib.*, ii., 67).]

the rural or rather rustic[1] solitude of Buriton,[2] from which, during several years, he seldom emerged.

As far back as I can remember, the house, near Putneybridge and churchyard, of my maternal grandfather appears in the light of my proper and native home. It was there that I was allowed to spend the greatest part of my time, in sickness or in health, during my school vacations and my parents' residence in London, and finally after my mother's death. Three months after that event, in the spring of 1748, the commercial ruin of her father, Mr. James Porten, was accomplished and declared. He suddenly absconded ;[3] but as his effects were not sold, nor the house evacuated till the Christmas following, I enjoyed during the whole year the society of my aunt, without much consciousness of her impending fate. I feel a melancholy pleasure in repeating my obligations to that excellent woman, Mrs. Catherine Porten, the true mother of my mind as well as of my health.[4] Her natural good sense was improved by the perusal of the best books in the English language ; and if her reason was sometimes clouded by prejudice, her sentiments were never disguised by hypocrisy or affectation. Her indulgent tenderness, the frankness of her temper, and my innate rising curiosity, soon removed all distance between us : like friends of an equal age, we freely conversed on every topic, familiar or abstruse ; and it was her delight and reward to observe the first shoots of my young

[1] [Johnson's first definition of *rustic* is "rural" ; but he gives as a second meaning "rude, untaught, inelegant," and as a third, "brutal, savage".]

[2] [See *post*, p. 116.]

[3] [These three words were omitted in the second edition.]

[4] [On her death in 1786 Gibbon wrote : "A good understanding and an excellent heart, with health, spirits, and a competency, to live in the midst of her friends till the age of fourscore, and then to shut her eyes without pain or remorse. . . . I was a puny child, neglected by my mother, starved by my nurse, and of whose being very little care or expectation was entertained ; without her maternal vigilance I should either have been in my grave, or imperfectly lived a crooked ricketty [*sic*] monster, a burthen to myself and others. To her instructions I owe the first rudiments of knowledge, the first exercise of reason, and a taste for books, which is still the pleasure and glory of my life ; and though she taught me neither language nor science, she was certainly the most useful preceptor I ever had" (*Corres.*, ii., 144).]

ideas.[1] Pain and languor were often soothed by the voice of instruction and amusement; and to her kind lessons I ascribe my early and invincible love of reading, which I would not exchange for the treasures of India. I should perhaps be astonished, were it possible to ascertain the date at which a favourite tale was engraved, by frequent repetition, in my memory: the Cavern of the Winds; the Palace of Felicity; and the fatal moment, at the end of three months or centuries, when Prince Adolphus is overtaken by Time, who had worn out so many pair of wings in the pursuit.[2] Before I left Kingston school I was well acquainted with Pope's Homer and the Arabian Nights Entertainments, two books which will always please by the moving picture of human manners and specious miracles;[3] nor was I then capable of discerning that Pope's translation is a portrait endowed with every merit, excepting that of likeness to the original.[4] The verses of Pope accustomed my ear to the sound of poetic harmony;[5] in the death of Hector, and the shipwreck of Ulysses, I tasted the new emotions of terror and pity; and seriously disputed with my aunt on the vices and virtues of the heroes of the Trojan war. From Pope's Homer to Dryden's Virgil was an easy transition; but I know not how, from some fault in the author, the translator, or the reader, the pious Æneas did not so forcibly seize on my imagination; and I derived more pleasure from Ovid's Metamorphoses, especially in the fall of

[1] ["Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot."
(Thomson's *Seasons:* "Spring," l. 1149.)
For Gibbon's obligations to his aunt see *Misc. Works*, ii., 388, 392.]

[2] [See Appendix 6.]

[3] ["Speciosa . . . miracula."
(Horace, *Ars Poet.*, l. 144.)
"Pilgrimage, and the holy wars, introduced into Europe the specious miracles of Arabian magic" (*The Decline*, iv., 151).]

[4] ["Mr. Pope, without perceiving it, has improved the theology of Homer" (*ib.*, i., 29). "It is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope," said Bentley; "but you must not call it Homer" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 256, *n.*).]

[5] ["I do not know," writes Lord Sheffield, "that Mr. Gibbon ever wrote a line of verse; yet he by no means neglected the Poets, but would read them aloud even in his chaise when travelling, particularly Homer" (*Misc. Works*, Preface, p. 10). See Read's *Historic Studies*, ii., 450, and D'Haussonville's *Le Salon de Madame Necker*, 1882, i., 49, for some of his French verses.]

Phaethon, and the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses. My grandfather's flight unlocked the door of a tolerable library; and I turned over many English pages of poetry and romance, of history and travels. Where a title attracted my eye, without fear or awe I snatched the volume from the shelf; and Mrs. Porten, who indulged herself in moral and religious speculations, was more prone to encourage than to check a curiosity above the strength of a boy. This year (1748), the twelfth of my age, I shall note as the most propitious to the growth of my intellectual stature.

The relics of my grandfather's fortune afforded a bare annuity for his own maintenance; and his daughter, my worthy aunt, who had already passed her fortieth year, was left destitute. Her noble spirit scorned a life of obligation and dependence; and after revolving several schemes, she preferred the humble industry of keeping a boarding-house for Westminster-school,[1] where she laboriously earned a competence for her old age.[2] This singular opportunity of blending the advantages of private and public education decided my father. After the Christmas holidays in January, 1749, I accompanied Mrs. Porten to her new house in College-street; and was immediately entered in the school, of which Dr. John Nicoll was at that time head-master.[3] At first I was alone: but my aunt's resolution was praised; her character was esteemed; her friends were numerous and active: in the course of some years she became the mother of forty or fifty boys, for the most part of family and fortune; and as her primitive habitation was too narrow, she built and occupied a spacious mansion in Dean's Yard. I shall always be ready to join in the common opinion, that our public schools, which have produced so many eminent characters, are the best adapted to the genius and constitution of the

[1] It is said in the family, that she was principally induced to this undertaking by her affection for her nephew, whose weak constitution required her constant and unremitted attention.—SHEFFIELD.

[2] ["An easy competency," Gibbon described it (*Misc. Works*, ii., 392).]

[3] [See Appendix 7.]

English people. A boy of spirit may acquire a previous and practical experience of the world; and his playfellows may be the future friends of his heart or his interest.[1] In a free intercourse with his equals, the habits of truth, fortitude, and prudence will insensibly be matured. Birth and riches are measured by the standard of personal merit; and the mimic scene of a rebellion has displayed, in their true colours, the ministers and patriots of the rising generation.[2] Our seminaries of learning do not exactly correspond with the precept of a Spartan king, "that the child should be instructed in the arts, which will be useful to the man[3]"; since a finished scholar may emerge from the head of Westminster or Eton, in total ignorance of the business and conversation of English gentlemen in the latter end of the eighteenth century. But these schools may assume the merit of teaching all that they pretend to teach, the Latin and Greek languages: they deposit in the hands of a disciple the keys of two valuable chests; nor can he complain, if they are afterwards lost or neglected by his own fault. The necessity of leading in equal ranks so many unequal powers of capacity and application,

[1] [Fielding wrote in 1752: "Much the greater part of our lads of fashion return from school at fifteen or sixteen very little wiser, and not at all the better, for having been sent thither" (Fielding's *Works*, ed. 1806, x., 116).

In the same year Chesterfield wrote to a friend: "If you would have your son be a very learned man, you must certainly send him to some great school; but if you would have him be a better thing, a very honest man, you should have him *à portée* of your own inspection. At those great schools the heart is wholly neglected by those who ought to form it" (Chesterfield's *Misc. Works*, iv., 243).

For Johnson's opinion of public and private education see Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 407; iii., 12; iv., 312; v., 85.]

[2] [Johnson writes in the *Life of Addison*: "The practice of barring-out was a savage licence, practised in many schools to the end of the last century, by which the boys, when the periodical vacation drew near, growing petulant at the approach of liberty, some days before the time of regular recess, took possession of the school, of which they barred the doors, and bade their master defiance from the windows". Johnson goes on to mention a story which had reached him that one such barring-out at Lichfield School "was planned and conducted by Addison" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 419).]

[3] ["'Επιζητοῦντος δέ τινος τίνα δεῖ μανθάνειν τοὺς παῖδας, ταῦτ' (εἶπεν) οἷς καὶ ἄνδρες γενόμενοι χρήσονται."
(Agesilaus.)

"Cuidam autem quaerenti quaenam pueris discenda forent, Ea respondit quibus et viri sint usuri."

(*Apophthegmata Graeca Regum et Ducum*, Hen. Steph., 1568, pp. 306, 307.)]

will prolong to eight or ten years the juvenile studies, which might be despatched in half that time by the skilful master of a single pupil. Yet even the repetition of exercise and discipline contributes to fix in a vacant mind the verbal science of grammar and prosody: and the private or voluntary student, who possesses the sense and spirit of the classics, may offend, by a false quantity, the scrupulous ear of a well-flogged critic. For myself, I must be content with a very small share of the civil and literary fruits of a public school. In the space of two years (1749, 1750) interrupted by danger and debility, I painfully climbed into the third form; and my riper age was left to acquire the beauties of the Latin, and the rudiments of the Greek tongue. Instead of audaciously mingling in the sports, the quarrels, and the connections of our little world, I was still cherished at home under the maternal wing of my aunt; and my removal from Westminster long preceded the approach of manhood.

The violence and variety of my complaint, which had excused my frequent absence from Westminster School, at length engaged Mrs. Porten, with the advice of physicians, to conduct me to Bath: at the end of the Michaelmas vacation (1750) she quitted me with reluctance, and I remained several months under the care of a trusty maid-servant. A strange nervous affection, which alternately contracted my legs, and produced, without any visible symptoms, the most excruciating pain, was ineffectually opposed by the various methods of bathing and pumping. From Bath I was transported to Winchester, to the house of a physician; and after the failure of his medical skill, we had again recourse to the virtues of the Bath waters. During the intervals of these fits, I moved with my father to Buriton and Putney; and a short unsuccessful trial was attempted to renew my attendance at Westminster School. But my infirmities could not be reconciled with the hours and discipline of a public seminary; and instead of a domestic tutor, who might have watched the favourable moments, and gently advanced the progress of my learning, my father was too easily content with such occasional

teachers as the different places of my residence could supply. I was never forced, and seldom was I persuaded, to admit these lessons: yet I read with a clergyman at Bath some odes of Horace, and several episodes of Virgil, which gave me an imperfect and transient enjoyment of the Latin poets. It might now be apprehended that I should continue for life an illiterate cripple; but, as I approached my sixteenth year, Nature displayed in my favour her mysterious energies: my constitution was fortified and fixed; and my disorders, instead of growing with my growth and strengthening with my strength, most wonderfully vanished. I have never possessed or abused the insolence of health[1]: but since that time few persons have been more exempt from real or imaginary ills, and, till I am admonished by the gout, the reader will no more be troubled with the history of my bodily complaints. My unexpected recovery again encouraged the hope of my education; and I was placed at Esher, in Surrey, in the house of the Reverend Mr. Philip Francis, in a pleasant spot, which promised to unite the various benefits of air, exercise, and study (January, 1752). The translator of Horace might have taught me to relish the Latin poets, had not my friends discovered in a few weeks, that he preferred the pleasures of London, to the instruction of his pupils.[2] My father's perplexity at this time, rather than his prudence, was urged to embrace a singular and desperate measure. Without preparation or delay he carried me to Oxford[3]; and I was matricu-

[1] [*Post*, p. 241. For his neglect of his health see *post*, p. 258.]

[2] ["Dr. Johnson said: 'The lyrical part of Horace never can be perfectly translated; so much of the excellence is in the numbers and the expression. Francis has done it the best; I'll take his, five out of six, against them all'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 356).

Francis was the father of Sir Philip Francis, who is commonly supposed to have been *Junius*.]

[3] [In a note at the end of the MS. of Gibbon's Memoirs in the British Museum it is stated that the greatest number of matriculations at Oxford between 1700 and 1800 was 372—in the year 1717; the least number was 146—in 1756. In 1750 190 matriculated. According to another MS., drawn up in 1807 by the Registrar of Cambridge University, the greatest number of matriculations at Cambridge between 1759 and 1800 was 210—in 1792; the least number was 92—in 1766.

The population of Oxford in 1750 (excluding the inhabitants of the colleges)

lated in the university as a gentleman commoner of Magdalen college, before I had accomplished the fifteenth year of my age (April 3, 1752).

The curiosity, which had been implanted in my infant mind, was still alive and active; but my reason was not sufficiently informed to understand the value, or to lament the loss of three precious years from my entrance at Westminster to my admission at Oxford. Instead of repining at my long and frequent confinement to the chamber or the couch, I secretly rejoiced in those infirmities, which delivered me from the exercises of the school, and the society of my equals. As often as I was tolerably exempt from danger and pain, reading, free desultory reading, was the employment and comfort of my solitary hours. At Westminster, my aunt sought only to amuse and indulge me; in my stations at Bath and Winchester, at Buriton and Putney, a false compassion respected my sufferings; and I was allowed, without controul or advice, to gratify the wanderings of an unripe taste. My indiscriminate appetite subsided by degrees in the *historic* line[1]; and since philosophy has exploded all innate ideas and natural propensities,[2] I must ascribe this choice to the assiduous perusal of the Universal History, as the octavo volumes successively appeared.[3] This unequal work, and a

was 8,292 (*Gent. Mag.*, 1752, p. 347). "The north side of the city is open to corn-fields and enclosures for many miles together, without an hill to intercept the free current of air, which purifies it from all noxious vapours. The soil is dry, being on a fine gravel, which renders it as healthful and pleasant a spot as any in the Kingdom" (*Pocket Companion for Oxford*, ed. 1762, p. 2).

"Oxford stands in a beautiful plain and sweet air" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1765, p. 73).]

[1] ["Johnson . . . was at all times prompt to repress colloquial barbarisms such as . . . the *civil line*, the *banking line*" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 196).]

[2] [Dr. Watts wrote in 1725: "There has been a great controversy about the origin of ideas, *viz.*, whether any of our ideas are innate or no, that is, born with us, and naturally belonging to our minds. Mr. Locke utterly denies it; others as positively affirm it" (*Logic*, i., 3, i.).

For "a strong example of the innate difference of characters" see *The Decline*, ii., 256. See also *post*, p. 143.]

[3] [To Gibbon might be applied Dryden's lines—

"For what in Nature's dawn the child admired,
The youth endeavoured, and the man acquired?"
(*Epistle to Kneller*, l. 130.)

In the Register of Books in *The Gent. Mag.* for July, 1740, p. 360, is "An

treatise of Hearne, the *Ductor historicus*[1] referred and introduced me to the Greek and Roman historians, to as many at least as were accessible to an English reader. All that I could find were greedily devoured, from Littlebury's lame Herodotus and Spelman's valuable Xenophon, to the pompous folios of Gordon's Tacitus and a ragged Procopius of the beginning of the last century. The cheap acquisition of so much knowledge confirmed my dislike to the study of languages; and I argued with Mrs. Porten, that, were I master of Greek and Latin, I must interpret to myself in English the thoughts of the original, and that such extemporary versions must be inferior to the elaborate translations of professed scholars; a silly sophism, which could not easily be confuted by a person ignorant of any other language than her own. From the ancient I leaped to the modern world: many crude lumps of Speed, Rapin, Mezeray, Davila, Machiavel, Father Paul, Bower, &c., I devoured like so many novels; and I swallowed with the same voracious appetite the descriptions of India and China, of Mexico and Peru.

My first introduction to the historic scenes, which have since engaged so many years of my life, must be ascribed to an accident. In the summer of 1751, I accompanied my father on a visit to Mr. Hoare's, in Wiltshire; but I was less

Universal History from the earliest Account of Time to the present. In five volumes in folio. Price £10 10s. 6d." In the Register for March, 1749, p. 144, is "Universal History, in 8vo, vol. xx., and last. Price 5s. in boards."

Gibbon in *The Decline*, v., 40, describes its authors as "these learned bigots," and v., 455, as "its self-sufficient compilers". On p. 396 he says of the 850 folio pages given to Mahomet and the Caliphs: "The dull mass is not quickened by a spark of philosophy or taste". On p. 318 he writes: "A nameless doctor has formally *demonstrated* the truth of Christianity by the independence of the Arabs". The list of the writers of the Universal History drawn up by Johnson (Johnson's *Letters*, ii., 431) shows that this "nameless doctor" was John Swinton. He it was who preaching to some convicts who were to be hanged next morning, "told them that he should give them the remainder of what he had to say on the subject the next Lord's Day" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 273).

Charles Lamb, who at the age of six was taken to the theatre for the first time, and saw *Artaxerxes*, writes: "I had dabbled a little in the *Universal History*—the ancient part of it—and here was the Court of Persia" (*Essays of Elia*, ed. 1889, p. 111).]

[1] [For this work and those mentioned on this and the next page see Appendix 8.]

delighted with the beauties of Stourhead, than with discovering in the library a common book, the Continuation of Eachard's Roman History, which is indeed executed with more skill and taste than the previous work. To me the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new; and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube,[1] when the summons of the dinner-bell reluctantly dragged me from my intellectual feast. This transient glance served rather to irritate than to appease my curiosity; and as soon as I returned to Bath I procured the second and third volumes of Howell's History of the World, which exhibit the Byzantine period on a larger scale. Mahomet and his Saracens soon fixed my attention; and some instinct of criticism directed me to the genuine sources. Simon Ockley, an original in every sense, first opened my eyes; and I was led from one book to another, till I had ranged round the circle of Oriental history. Before I was sixteen, I had exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians, the Tartars and Turks; and the same ardour urged me to guess at the French of D'Herbelot,[2] and to construe the barbarous Latin of Pocock's Abulfaragius. Such vague and multifarious reading could not teach me to think, to write, or to act; and the only principle that darted a ray of light into the indigested chaos, was an early and rational application to the order of time and place. The maps of Cellarius and Wells imprinted in my mind the picture of ancient geography: from Strauchius I imbibed the elements of chronology: the Tables of Helvicus and Anderson, the Annals of Usher and Prideaux distinguished the connection of events, and I engraved the multitude of names and dates in a clear and indelible series. But in the discussion of the first ages I overleaped the bounds of modesty and use. In my childish balance I presumed to weigh the systems of Scaliger and Petavius, of Marsham and Newton,[3] which I could seldom

[1] [See *The Decline*, iii., 94.]

[2] [*Post*, p. 63, *n.*]

[3] [*Ibid.*, pp. 63, 129.]

study in the originals; and my sleep has been disturbed by the difficulty of reconciling the Septuagint with the Hebrew computation.[1] I arrived at Oxford with a stock of erudition, that might have puzzled a doctor,[2] and a degree of ignorance, of which a schoolboy would have been ashamed.

At the conclusion of this first period of my life, I am tempted to enter a protest against the trite and lavish praise of the happiness of our boyish years, which is echoed with so much affectation in the world.[3] That happiness I have never known, that time I have never regretted; and were my poor aunt still alive, she would bear testimony to the early and constant uniformity of my sentiments. It will

[1] ["The primitive church of Antioch computed almost 6000 years from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ. Africanus, Lactantius, and the Greek Church have reduced that number to 5500, and Eusebius has contented himself with 5200 years. These calculations were formed on the Septuagint, which was universally received during the six first centuries. The authority of the Vulgate and of the Hebrew text has determined the Moderns, Protestants as well as Catholics, to prefer a period of about 4000 years; though in the study of profane antiquity they often find themselves straitened by those narrow limits" (*The Decline*, ii., 23). "I regret this chronology [Africanus's], so far preferable to our double and perplexed method of counting backwards and forwards the years before and after the Christian era" (*ib.*, iv., 269).]

[2] [See *Auto.*, p. 57, for Gibbon in his boyhood, "surrounded with a heap of folios". Pattison writes of F. A. Wolf's entrance at Göttingen in 1777: "Since Gibbon, who took to Magdalen 'a stock of learning which might have puzzled a doctor,' so extraordinary a student had, perhaps, never entered a university" (Pattison's *Essays*, ed. 1889, i., 348).]

[3] ["Dr. Johnson maintained that a boy at school was the happiest of human beings. I supported a different opinion, from which I have never yet varied, that a man is happier; and I enlarged upon the anxiety and sufferings which are endured at school. JOHNSON. 'Ah! Sir, a boy's being flogged is not so severe as a man's having the hiss of the world against him. Men have a solicitude about fame; and the greater share they have of it, the more afraid they are of losing it'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 451).

Four years before Johnson said this, Adam Smith had written: "Compared with the contempt of mankind, all other external evils are easily supported" (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. 1801, i., 119).

Cowper had been happier than Gibbon. "My imagination," he wrote, "set me down in the sixth form at Westminster. I fancied myself once more a schoolboy, a period of life in which, if I had never tasted true happiness, I was at least equally unacquainted with its contrary" (Southey's *Cowper*, i., 15). In *The Task*, i., 116, writing of his schoolboy days, he says:—

> "I still remember, nor without regret
> Of hours that sorrow since has much endear'd," etc.

Sir Walter Scott, who had been at the same school as Boswell, sided with Gibbon. "Did I ever," he wrote, "pass unhappy years anywhere? None that I remember, save those at the High School, which I thoroughly detested on account of the confinement" (Lockhart's *Scott*, ed. 1839, viii., 368).]

indeed be replied, that *I* am not a competent judge; that pleasure is incompatible with pain; that joy is excluded from sickness; and that the felicity of a schoolboy consists in the perpetual motion of thoughtless and playful agility, in which I was never qualified to excel. My name, it is most true, could never be enrolled among the sprightly race, the idle progeny of Eton or Westminster,

> Who foremost may [now] delight to cleave,
> With pliant arm, the [thy] glassy wave,
> Or urge the flying ball.[1]

The poet may gaily describe the short hours of recreation; but he forgets the daily tedious labours of the school, which is approached each morning with anxious and reluctant steps.[2]

A traveller, who visits Oxford or Cambridge, is surprised and edified by the apparent order and tranquillity that prevail in the seats of the English muses. In the most celebrated universities of Holland, Germany, and Italy, the students, who swarm from different countries, are loosely dispersed in private lodgings at the houses of the burghers: they dress according to their fancy and fortune; and in the intemperate quarrels of youth and wine, their *swords*, though less frequently than of old, are sometimes stained with each other's blood.[3] The use of arms is banished from our English universities; the uniform habit of the academics, the square cap, and black

[1] [Gray's *Eton College.*]

[2] ["Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school."
(*As You Like It*, Act ii., Sc. 7, l. 145.)]

[3] [C. E. Jordan thus wrote of Oxford in 1733: "Je logeai à Oxford au Blow Board [? Blue Boar], où on est fort bien. La ville est petite, et il y a peu de belles maisons. Les Collèges y sont magnifiques. Les dehors de la ville sont très riants. . . . Le nombre des étudiants d'Oxford va à 2,000. Ils ne portent ni bâton, ni épée. Tous portent la robe et le bonnet quarré: l'habillement diffère suivant les dégrés et la qualité. Un étudiant vit fort agréablement dans un Collège: il est bien logé et nourri; et sa dépense monte (s'il sait œconomiser) par rapport à l'entretien à 100 pièces. Tout est bien réglé dans cette Académie, ou plutôt Université; les désordres n'y regnent pas comme dans celles d'Allemagne" (*Histoire d'un Voyage Littéraire*, ed. 1735, p. 174). Jordan, comparing Leipsic with Halle, says: "Les manières y sont plus polies, les étudians ne s'y livrent pas à une débauche aussi crasse; ils y sont fort galants, ils sacrifient plus à Venus qu'à Bacchus" (*ib.*, p. 9).]

gown, is adapted to the civil and even clerical professions; and from the doctor in divinity to the under-graduate, the degrees of learning and age are externally distinguished. Instead of being scattered in a town, the students of Oxford and Cambridge are united in colleges; their maintenance is provided at their own expense, or that of the founders; and the stated hours of the hall and chapel represent the discipline of a regular, and, as it were, a religious community.[1] The eyes of the traveller are attracted by the size or beauty of the public edifices; and the principal colleges appear to be so many palaces, which a liberal nation has erected and endowed for the habitation of science. My own introduction to the university of Oxford forms a new æra in my life; and at the distance of forty years I still remember my first emotions of surprise and satisfaction. In my fifteenth year I felt myself suddenly raised from a boy to a man: the persons, whom I respected as my superiors in age and academical rank, entertained me with every mark of attention and civility; and my vanity was flattered by the velvet cap and silk gown, which distinguish a gentleman commoner[2] from a plebeian student. A decent allowance, more money than a schoolboy had ever seen, was at my own disposal; and I might command, among the tradesmen of Oxford, an indefinite and dangerous latitude of credit. A key was delivered into my hands, which gave me the free use of a numerous and learned library, my apartment consisted of three elegant and well-furnished rooms in the new building, a stately pile, of Magdalen College,

[1] ["Their institutions, although somewhat fallen from their primæval simplicity, are such as influence in a particular manner the moral conduct of their youth; and in this general depravity of manners and laxity of principles, pure religion is nowhere more strictly inculcated. . . . They render their students virtuous, at least by excluding all opportunities of vice, and by teaching them the principles of the Church of England confirm them in those of true Christianity" (*The Idler*, Dec. 2, 1758, No. 33).]

[2] [Sainte-Beuve describes him as entering "en qualité d'étudiant ordinaire" (*Causeries*, viii., 436).

Mrs. Delany (*Auto. and Corres.*, iii., 583), writing in 1760 about her nephew going to Oxford, says: "I hope he will not fall into any vulgar error, now much encouraged at Oxford, that 'peers are not worth being acquainted with'".]

and the adjacent walks, had they been frequented by Plato's disciples, might have been compared to the Attic shade on the banks of the Ilissus. Such was the fair prospect of my entrance (April 3, 1752) into the university of Oxford.[1]

A venerable prelate, whose taste and erudition must reflect honour on the society in which they were formed, has drawn a very interesting picture of his academical life.[2] "I was educated (says Bishop Lowth) in the UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. I enjoyed all the advantages, both public and private, which that famous seat of learning so largely affords. I spent many years in that illustrious society, in a well-regulated course of useful discipline and studies, and in the agreeable and improving commerce of gentlemen and of scholars; in a society where emulation without envy, ambition without jealousy, contention without animosity, incited industry, and awakened genius; where a liberal pursuit of knowledge, and a genuine [generous] freedom of thought, was raised, encouraged, and pushed forward by example, by commendation, and by authority. I breathed the same atmosphere that the HOOKERS, the CHILLINGWORTHS, and the LOCKES had breathed before; whose benevolence and humanity were as extensive as their vast genius and comprehensive knowledge; who always treated their adversaries with civility and respect; who made candour, moderation, and liberal judgment as much the rule and law as the subject of their discourse. [. . .] And do you reproach me with my education in this place, and with my relation to this most respectable body, which I shall always esteem my greatest advantage and my highest honour?"[3] I transcribe with pleasure this eloquent passage, without examining what benefits or what rewards were derived by Hooker, or Chillingworth, or Locke, from their academical institution; without inquiring, whether in this angry controversy the spirit of

[1] [See Appendix 9.]

[2] [In *A Letter to the Right Reverend Author of The Divine Legation*, etc. By a late Professor of the University of Oxford. 4th ed. London, 1766, p. 64. The first edition is dated Aug. 31, 1765.]

[3] [See Appendix 10.]

Lowth himself is purified from the intolerant zeal,[1] which Warburton had ascribed to the genius of the place.[2] It may indeed be observed, that the atmosphere of Oxford did not agree with Mr. Locke's constitution; and that the philosopher justly despised the academical bigots, who expelled his person and condemned his principles.[3] The expression of gratitude is a virtue and a pleasure: a liberal mind will delight to cherish and celebrate the memory of its parents; and the teachers of science are the parents of the minds. I applaud the filial piety, which it is impossible for me to imitate; since I must not confess an imaginary debt, to assume the merit of a just or generous retribution. To the university of Oxford *I* acknowledge no obligation; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son, as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother. I spent fourteen months at Magdalen College; they proved the fourteen months the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life[4]: the reader will pronounce between

[1] ["In the time of Job the crime of impiety was punished by the Arabian magistrate (c. xiii., vv. 26-8). I blush for a respectable prelate (*De Poesi Hebræorum*, pp. 650, 651, edit. Michaelis; and *Letter of a Late Professor in the University of Oxford*, pp. 15, 53) who justifies and applauds this patriarchal inquisition" (*The Decline*, v., 354; see also *Auto.*, p. 304).]

[2] [I do not think that these precise words are used by Warburton. Thomas Warton uses them in *The Idler*, No. 33, where, speaking of Oxford and Cambridge, he says: "There is at least one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the GENIUS *of the place*". Dryden adjured Oxford "by the sacred Genius of this place" (*Works*, ed. 1885, x., 386). Gibbon says of Jerusalem: "Sages and heroes . . . have confessed the inspiration of the genius of the place" (*The Decline*, ii., 455).]

[3] [See Appendix 11.]

[4] ["Bentham spoke of the university with asperity to the end of his days" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 39). Southey, who entered Balliol College in 1793, wrote in 1807: "Of all the months in my life (happily they did not amount to years) those which were passed at Oxford were the most unprofitable. What Greek I took there, I literally left there, and could not help losing; and all I learnt was a little swimming and a little boating. I never remember to have dreamt of Oxford—a sure proof how little it entered into my moral being;—of school, on the contrary, I dream perpetually" (Southey's *Life and Corres.*, iii., 85). When he was at College he wrote: "With respect to its superiors, Oxford only exhibits waste of wigs and want of wisdom; with respect to under-graduates, every species of abandoned excess. . . . Never shall child of mine enter a public school or a university" (*ib.*, i., 177, 178). "It is curious," writes Mr. Francis Darwin, "that my father often spoke of his Cambridge life as if it had been so much time wasted, forgetting that although the set studies of the place were barren enough for him, he yet gained in the highest degree the best advantages of a university life—the contact with men and an opportunity of

the school and the scholar; but I cannot affect to believe that Nature had disqualified me for all literary pursuits. The specious and ready excuse of my tender age, imperfect preparation, and hasty departure, may doubtless be alleged; nor do I wish to defraud such excuses of their proper weight. Yet in my sixteenth year I was not devoid of capacity or application; even my childish reading had displayed an early though blind propensity for books; and the shallow flood might have been taught to flow in a deep channel and a clear stream. In the discipline of a well-constituted academy, under the guidance of skilful and vigilant professors, I should gradually have risen from translations to originals, from the Latin to the Greek classics, from dead languages to living science: my hours would have been occupied by useful and agreeable studies, the wanderings of fancy would have been restrained, and I should have escaped the temptations of idleness, which finally precipitated my departure from Oxford.[1]

Perhaps in a separate annotation I may coolly examine the fabulous and real antiquities of our sister universities, a question which has kindled such fierce and foolish disputes among their fanatic sons.[2] In the meanwhile it will be acknowledged

mental growth." He wrote to Sir J. D. Hooker in 1847: "I am glad you like my *Alma Mater*, which I despise heartily as a place of education, but love from many most pleasant recollections" (*Life of Charles Darwin*, ed. 1892, p. 105).]

[1] ["No discipline is ever requisite to force attendance upon lectures which are really worth the attending, as is well known wherever any such lectures are given" (*Wealth of Nations*, ed. 1811, iii., 172).]

[2] [Milton, in his *History of England*, mentions the reported foundation of Cambridge by Sigebert, King of East Angles, and of Oxford by Alfred (Milton's *Works*, ed. 1806, iv., 134, 183). Ayliffe, in *The Ancient and Present State of the University of Oxford*, ed. 1723, i., 9-13, says that "the traditions touching the commencement of these two Universities, long contending with each other on the score of antiquity, were at first the inventions of the monks, receiving their education in these respective schools of learning, and were afterwards imposed on the world for the sake of victory". Oxford, he says, according to one writer, was founded by some "excellent philosophers, with the Trojans coming out of Greece under Brute"; while Cambridge owed its foundation to "King Cantaber, a Spaniard, driven out of his own country by his subjects, 375 years B.C." Ayliffe himself says that "it is probable that the University of Oxford was founded soon after this kingdom embraced the Christian religion". Alfred did nothing more than "restore this University

that these venerable bodies are sufficiently old to partake of all the prejudices and infirmities of age. The schools of Oxford and Cambridge were founded in a dark age of false and barbarous science; and they are still tainted with the vices of their origin. Their primitive discipline was adapted to the education of priests and monks; and the government still remains in the hands of the clergy, an order of men whose manners are remote from the present world, and whose eyes are dazzled by the light of philosophy.[1] The legal incorporation of these societies by the charters of popes [2] and kings had given them a monopoly of the public instruction; and the spirit of monopolists is narrow, lazy, and oppressive; their work is more costly and less productive than that of independent artists; and the new improvements so eagerly

to its pristine glory. . . . King Edward the Elder, his son, restored the University of Cambridge, confirming to the Doctors and Scholars there all their privileges."

"The Divinity Lectures of Robert Pullein," wrote Gibbon, "in the Abbey of Oseney (1129-1135) I consider as the *punctum saliens* of the University." He quotes a passage about a colony of monks opening public schools at Cambridge in 1109, but adds "curious but spurious" (*Misc. Works*, v., 522, 523).]

[1] ["The Gothic arms were less fatal to the schools of Athens than the establishment of a new religion, whose ministers superseded the exercise of reason, resolved every question by an article of faith, and condemned the infidel or sceptic to eternal flames" (*The Decline*, iv., 265). Gibbon, writing of "Christian Geography" in the sixth century, says: "The study of nature was the surest symptom of an unbelieving mind" (*ib.*, iv., 234).

"With the liberty of Europe its genius awoke, but the first efforts of its growing strength were consumed in vain and fruitless pursuits. . . . The two great sources of knowledge, nature and antiquity, were neglected. . . . The numerous vermin of mendicant friars, Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustins, Carmelites, who swarmed in this century [the thirteenth], with habits and institutions variously ridiculous, disgraced religion, learning, and common sense. They seized on scholastic philosophy as a science peculiarly suited to their minds; and, excepting only Friar Bacon, they all preferred words to things. The subtle, the profound, the irrefragable, the angelic, and the seraphic Doctor acquired those pompous titles by filling ponderous volumes with a small number of technical terms, and a much smaller number of ideas. Universities arose in every part of Europe, and thousands of students employed their lives upon these grave follies" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 19-29).

"To speak freely, it were much better there were not one divine in the universities, no school divinity known, the idle sophistry of monks, the canker of religion" (Milton's *Works*, iii., 388).]

[2] ["In 1459 the University [of Basil] was founded by Pope Pius II. (Æneas Sylvius), who had been Secretary to the Council [of Basil]. But what is a Council or an University to the presses of Froben and the studies of Erasmus?" (*The Decline*, vii., 100.)]

grasped by the competition of freedom, are admitted with slow and sullen reluctance in those proud corporations, above the fear of a rival, and below the confession of an error. We can scarcely hope that any reformation will be a voluntary act; and so deeply are they rooted in law and prejudice, that even the omnipotence of parliament would shrink from an inquiry into the state and abuses of the two universities.[1]

The use of academical degrees, as old as the thirteenth century, is visibly borrowed from the mechanic corporations; in which an apprentice, after serving his time, obtains a testimonial of his skill, and a licence to practise his trade and mystery.[2] It is not my design to depreciate those honours, which could never gratify or disappoint my ambition; and I should applaud the institution, if the degrees of bachelor or licentiate were bestowed as the reward of manly and successful study: if the name and rank of doctor or master were strictly reserved for the professors of science, who have approved their title to the public esteem.

In all the universities of Europe, excepting our own, the languages and sciences are distributed among a numerous list of effective professors: the students, according to their taste, their calling, and their diligence, apply themselves to the proper masters; and in the annual repetition of public and private lectures, these masters are assiduously employed.[3] Our curiosity may inquire what number of professors has been instituted at Oxford? (for I shall now confine myself to my own university;) by whom are they appointed, and what may be the probable chances of merit or incapacity; how many are stationed to the three faculties, and how many are left for the liberal arts? what is the form, and what the

[1] [It was not till 1850 that a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the State of the Universities was appointed. Its report was issued in 1852, and the Act embodying their recommendations was passed in 1854—one hundred and one years after Gibbon left Oxford. By that time the University as a whole, and most of the Colleges, as "a voluntary act," had made an extensive reformation.]

[2] ["The privileges of graduates are a sort of statutes of apprenticeship" (*The Wealth of Nations*, iii., 170).]

[3] [See Appendix 12.]

substance, of their lessons? But all these questions are silenced by one short and singular answer, "That in the university of Oxford, the greater part of the public professors have for these many years given up altogether even the pretence of teaching".[1] Incredible as the fact may appear, I must rest my belief on the positive and impartial evidence of a master of moral and political wisdom, who had himself resided at Oxford. Dr. Adam Smith assigns as the cause of their indolence, that, instead of being paid by voluntary contributions, which would urge them to increase the number, and to deserve the gratitude of their pupils, the Oxford professors are secure in the enjoyment of a fixed stipend, without the necessity of labour, or the apprehension of controul.[2] It has indeed been observed, nor is the observation absurd, that excepting in experimental sciences, which demand a costly apparatus and a dexterous hand, the many valuable treatises, that have been published on every subject of learning, may now supersede the ancient mode of oral instruction.[3] Were this principle true in its utmost latitude, I should only infer that the offices and salaries, which are become useless, ought without delay to be abolished. But

[1] [(*Wealth of Nations*, iii., 168.) Gibbon, in describing the schools of Athens, alludes to this passage: "A judicious philosopher prefers the free contributions of the students to a fixed stipend for the professor" (*The Decline*, iv., 264). Adam Smith was at Balliol College without a break from 1740 to 1746, being supported by an exhibition from the University of Glasgow. That he was benefited by his residence he shows in his letter of acknowledgment, in 1787, on his being chosen Rector of that university. "No man," he wrote, "can owe greater obligations to a society than I do to the University of Glasgow. They educated me; they sent me to Oxford" (Dugald Stewart's *Life of Smith*, ed. 1811, p. 111).]

[2] [*Wealth of Nations*, iii., 167.]

[3] [Gibbon, no doubt, referred to Dr. Johnson, who, "talking of education, said: 'People have now-a-days got a strange opinion that everything should be taught by lectures. Now, I cannot see that lectures can do so much good as reading the books from which the lectures are taken. I know nothing that can be best taught by lectures, except where experiments are to be shown. You may teach chymistry by lectures.—You might teach making of shoes by lectures'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 7).

Charles Darwin says of the two sessions he studied in Edinburgh University (1825-7): "The instruction was altogether by lectures, and these were intolerably dull, with the exception of those on chemistry by Hope; but to my mind there are no advantages and many disadvantages in lectures compared with reading" (*Life of C. Darwin*, ed. 1892, p. 11).]

there still remains a material difference between a book and a professor ; the hour of the lecture enforces attendance ; attention is fixed by the presence, the voice, and the occasional questions of the teacher ; the most idle will carry something away ; and the more diligent will compare the instructions, which they have heard in the school, with the volumes, which they peruse in their chamber. The advice of a skilful professor will adapt a course of reading to every mind and every situation ; his authority will discover, admonish, and at last chastise the negligence of his disciples ; and his vigilant inquiries will ascertain the steps of their literary progress. Whatever science he professes he may illustrate in a series of discourses, composed in the leisure of his closet, pronounced on public occasions, and finally delivered to the press. I observe with pleasure, that in the university of Oxford Dr. Lowth, with equal eloquence and erudition, has executed this task in his incomparable *Prælections* on the Poetry of the Hebrews.[1]

The college of St. Mary Magdalen was founded in the fifteenth century by Wainfleet, bishop of Winchester ; and now consists of a president, forty fellows, and a number of inferior students.[2] It is esteemed one of the largest and most

[1] ["All Scotland (said Johnson) could not muster learning enough for Lowth's "Prælections" (*Johnsonian Misc.*, ii., 48).

Lowth was Professor of Poetry from 1741 to 1751. His *Prælectiones De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum* is advertised in *The Gent. Mag.* for March, 1753. "It was the first sign of the awakening of Oxford from that torpor under which two generations had now lain, under the besotting influence of Jacobite and high-church politics. The Lectures, *De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum*, seemed to combine the polish of a past generation, long gone, with the learning of a new period to come. The lore of Michaelis was here dressed out in Latin as classical as, and more vigorous than, that of Addison. . . . Lowth's audience, though no judges of Hebrew, were connoisseurs in Latin ; and these lectures, interspersed with frequent passages of tasteful Latin translation, were delivered to thronging crowds, such as professional lecture rooms had long ceased to hold. In the ten years of Lowth's tenure of the chair he could boast that the study of Hebrew, which had been almost extinct, 'nimium diu neglectam et pæne obsoletam,' had been rekindled by his exertions" (Pattison's *Essays*, ed. 1889, ii., 135-6).]

[2] [There were, and still are, thirty students on the foundation, called Demies (the second syllable is accentuated). They were "so called because their allowance or 'commons' was originally half that of a Fellow ; the Latin term is *semi-communarius*" (*The New Eng. Dict.*).]

wealthy of our academical corporations, which may be compared to the Benedictine abbeys of Catholic countries; and I have loosely heard that the estates belonging to Magdalen College, which are leased by those indulgent landlords at small quit-rents and occasional fines,[1] might be raised, in the hands of private avarice, to an annual revenue of nearly thirty thousand pounds.[2] Our colleges are supposed to be schools of science as well as of education; nor is it unreasonable to expect that a body of literary men, devoted to a life of celibacy, exempt from the care of their own subsistence, and amply provided with books, should devote their leisure to the prosecution of study, and that some effects of their studies should be manifested to the world. The shelves of their library groan under the weight of the Benedictine folios, of the editions of the fathers, and the collections of the middle ages, which have issued from the single abbey of St. Germain de Prez at Paris.[3] A composition of genius must be the offspring

[1] ["Some landlords, instead of raising the rent, take a fine for the renewal of the lease. This practice is in most cases the expedient of a spendthrift, who, for a sum of ready money, sells a future revenue of much greater value. It is in most cases, therefore, hurtful to the landlord. It is frequently hurtful to the tenant, and it is always hurtful to the community" (*Wealth of Nations*, iii., 268).]

[2] ["In the days of James the Second the riches of Magdalen were immense, and were exaggerated by report. The college was popularly said to be wealthier than the wealthiest abbeys of the Continent. When the leases fell in,—so ran the vulgar rumour,—the rents would be raised to the prodigious sum of forty thousand pounds a year" (Macaulay's *England*, ed. 1873, iii., 19).]

[3] [Gibbon, writing of the end of the tenth century, says: "While the Mussulmans . . . preserved the light of science, Europe sunk still deeper into ignorance, barbarism and superstition. The Benedictine abbeys, though they nursed the last of these monsters, opposed some faint resistance against the two former. They transcribed ancient books," etc. (*Misc. Works*, iii., 8). In the last year of his life he acknowledged the merits of "the MONKISH HISTORIANS, as they are contemptuously styled. Our candour," he adds, "and even our justice, should learn to estimate their value and to excuse their imperfections" (*ib.*, p. 561).

When Bentley was editing the New Testament he sent a Fellow of his college to Paris, in 1719, to collate manuscripts. "The Benedictines," writes Bentley's biographer, "besides communicating all their own manuscripts, and using their interest in procuring collations from their brethren of Angers, accommodated him with a room and fire in their monastery of St. Germain des Prés for his work, and several of them gave him assistance in the labour of collation" (Monk's *Bentley*, ii., 122).

Jordan wrote of the Abbey in 1733: "Tout y respire la science et la politesse" (*Voyage Littéraire fait en* 1733, p. 78). For the kindness of the English Benedictines to Johnson see Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 402.]

of one mind; but such works of industry as may be divided among many hands, and must be continued during many years, are the peculiar province of a laborious community. If I inquire into the manufactures of the monks[1] of Magdalen, if I extend the inquiry to the other colleges of Oxford and Cambridge,[2] a silent blush, or a scornful frown, will be the only reply. The fellows or monks of my time were decent easy men, who supinely enjoyed the gifts of the founder; their days were filled by a series of uniform employments; the chapel and the hall, the coffee-house and the common room, till they retired, weary and well satisfied, to a long slumber. From the toil of reading, or thinking, or writing, they had absolved their conscience; and the first shoots of learning and ingenuity withered on the ground, without yielding any fruits to the owners or the public.[3] As a gentleman commoner, I was admitted to the society of the fellows, and fondly expected

[1] [The scornfulness of the epithet is only fully understood by reading Gibbon's account of the monks in *The Decline*. "These unhappy exiles from social life," he writes, "were impelled by the dark and implacable genius of superstition. . . . The freedom of the mind, the source of every generous and rational sentiment, was destroyed by the habits of credulity and submission, and the monk, contracting the vices of a slave, devoutly followed the faith and passions of his ecclesiastical tyrant. . . . Pleasure and guilt are synonymous terms in the language of the monks. . . . The monastic studies have tended for the most part to darken rather than to dispel the cloud of superstition. . . . A cruel, unfeeling temper has distinguished the monks of every age and country. . . . The sacred indolence of the monks was devoutly embraced by a servile and effeminate age. . . . Europe was overrun by the Barbarians, and Asia by the monks" (*The Decline*, iv., 62, 66, 67, 69, 74, 163; 235). In an earlier passage he says that "no church has been dedicated, no altar has been erected, to the only monk who died a martyr in the cause of humanity" (*ib.*, iii., 258). Of Athanasius he says: "As he was writing to monks, there could not be any occasion for him to *affect* a rational language" (*ib.*, ii., 340).]

[2] [Parr entered Emmanuel College in 1765. "The unreserved conversation of scholars," he writes, "the disinterested offices of friendship, the use of valuable books, and the example of good men, are endearments by which Cambridge will keep a strong hold upon my esteem, my respect, and my gratitude, to the latest moment of my life. Never shall I have the presumption 'to disclaim her as a mother,' and never may she have just occasion 'to renounce me as a son'" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 566. See also *ib.*, p. 564, for the diligence of the students).

Pitt, who entered Cambridge in 1773, besides studying mathematics, read with his tutor all the works of almost every Greek or Latin writer of any eminence (Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 15). Gray, who entered in 1734, "always disliked and ridiculed the system of education at Cambridge" (Mitford's *Gray's Works*, i., Preface, p. 22. See also *ib.*, i., 140, for his "Hymn to Ignorance").]

[3] [See Appendix 13.]

that some questions of literature would be the amusing and instructive topics of their discourse. Their conversation stagnated in a round of college business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal:[1] their dull and deep potations excused the brisk intemperance of youth; and their constitutional toasts were not expressive of the most lively loyalty for the house of Hanover.[2] A general election was now approaching: the great Oxfordshire contest already blazed with all the malevolence of party zeal. Magdalen College was devoutly attached to the old interest! and the names of Wenman and Dashwood were more frequently pronounced than those of Cicero and Chrysostom.[3] The example of the senior fellows could not inspire the under-graduates with a liberal spirit or studious emulation; and I cannot describe, as I never knew, the discipline of college. Some duties may possibly have been imposed on the poor scholars, whose ambition aspired to the peaceful honours of a fellowship (*ascribi*

[1] [Dr. Bloxam records an anecdote, too gross to quote, of an act of public indecency committed by Richard Jackson, Doctor of Divinity, who became Fellow of Magdalen in 1744 (*Register of the Presidents, etc., of Magdalen College*, vi., 204).

Three days after Gibbon entered Oxford the "unfortunate" Miss Blandy was hanged on the Castle Green for murdering her father. There were 5,000 spectators, "many of whom, and particularly several gentlemen of the University, shed tears" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1752, p. 188). There was no lack that day of a subject for talk in the Common Room.]

[2] [Lord Hervey (*Memoirs*, i., 205) records that in 1733, on the dropping of the Excise Bill, "for three nights together, round the bonfires made at Oxford, the healths of Ormond, Bolingbroke and James III., were publicly drank".]

[3] ["Oxford. May 31, 1754.—On Monday last the gentlemen of the new interest finished their objections to the voters for Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood; after which the gentlemen of the old interest proceeded to examine evidence for requalifying the votes objected to, and continued their examination till Thursday at noon. But the writ being returnable next morning, the High Sheriff declared that as the time limited would not permit him to go through the whole scrutiny, he found himself obliged to return all the four candidates, and leave the determination to the House of Commons. By the care taken to preserve the peace, notwithstanding the great concourse of people, no remarkable disturbance happened till Thursday afternoon, when the gentlemen of the new interest set out in a grand cavalcade with streamers flying, etc., down the High Street. Upon Magdalen Bridge, some dirt and stones being thrown by the populace of the other party, a pistol was rashly discharged, as it is said, out of a post-chaise, and a chimney-sweeper's boy had his skull fractured by the ball" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1754, p. 289).

See Colman's *Connoisseur*, No. xi., dated April 11, 1754, for a dispute between two "academical rakes" in a Covent Garden tavern over the old and new interest.]

quietis ordinibus . . . Deorum);[1] but no independent members were admitted below the rank of a gentleman commoner, and our velvet cap was the cap of liberty. A tradition prevailed that some of our predecessors had spoken Latin declamations in the hall,[2] but of this ancient custom no vestige remained: the obvious methods of public exercises and examinations were totally unknown;[3] and I have never heard that either the president or the society interfered in the private economy of the tutors and their pupils.

The silence of the Oxford professors, which deprives the youth of public instruction, is imperfectly supplied by the tutors, as they are styled, of the several colleges. Instead of confining themselves to a single science, which had satisfied the ambition of Burman,[4] or Bernoulli,[5] they teach, or

[1] ["Ranked among the tranquil powers divine."
(Francis' *Horace, Odes*, iii., 3, 35.)
"The more I see of the Foundation [of Queen's College] the more I felicitate myself that I did not enter upon it. I could not bear to be so browbeaten" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, p. 56).]

[2] [See Appendix 14.]

[3] [James mentions in 1781, "a person of Merton College, who, being to take orders on Sunday last, was under absolute necessity of having his degree. Trifling and farcical as these things are known to be, I never saw a man under more apprehensions, or with greater reason, for he protested to us with vehemence that he had not looked in any Latin or Greek book since his matriculation; and as for the sciences, he was hardly acquainted with their names. Yet he escaped, and was rewarded by a certificate signed by three Masters, setting forth—ay, here it is—that Cattel of Merton College, 'in singulis artibus seu scientiis, quas et quatenus per statuta audivisse tenetur, laudabiles progressus et pares ei gradui, quem ambit, fecisse; ac speciatim in rebus quotidiani usus animi sui sensa linguâ Latinâ explicandi eâ facultate pollere quam statuta requirunt'" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, p. 160).]

[4] [Burman is an unfortunate instance. "In the University of Utrecht, Burman, in 1696, was chosen Professor of Eloquence and History, to which was added, after some time, the professorship of the Greek Language, and afterwards that of Politics." Vacating these offices he accepted the professorships of History, Eloquence and the Greek Language at Leyden. He was twice Rector of the University. "When the professorship of History of the United Provinces became vacant, it was conferred on him, as an addition to his honours and revenues which he might justly claim; and afterwards they made him Chief Librarian" (Johnson's *Works*, vi., 401-403).]

[5] ["The Bernoullis and Euler made Basel famous as the cradle of great mathematicians. The family of Bernoullis furnished in the course of a century eight members who distinguished themselves in mathematics. The first was born in 1654; the last died in 1807" (Cajori's *Hist. of Math.*, 1894, p. 236).
Voltaire writes in his *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, ch. 31: "Les idées superstitieuses étaient tellement enracinées chez les hommes, que les comètes les effrayaient encore en 1680. On osait à peine combattre cette crainte populaire.

promise to teach, either history or mathematics, or ancient literature, or moral philosophy; and as it is possible that they may be defective in all, it is highly probable that of some they will be ignorant. They are paid, indeed, by voluntary contributions; but their appointment depends on the head of the house: their diligence is voluntary, and will consequently be languid, while the pupils themselves, or their parents, are not indulged in the liberty of choice or change. The first tutor into whose hands I was resigned appears to have been one of the best of the tribe: Dr. Waldegrave was a learned and pious man, of a mild disposition, strict morals and abstemious life, who seldom mingled in the politics or the jollity of the college. But his knowledge of the world was confined to the university; his learning was of the last, rather than the present age; his temper was indolent; his faculties, which were not of the first rate, had been relaxed by the climate, and he was satisfied, like his fellows, with the slight and superficial discharge of an important trust. As soon as my tutor had sounded the insufficiency of his pupil in school-learning, he proposed that we should read every morning from ten to eleven the comedies of Terence.[1] The sum of my improvement in the university of Oxford is confined to three or four Latin plays; and even the study of an elegant classic, which might have been illustrated by a comparison of ancient and modern theatres, was reduced to a dry and literal interpretation of the author's text. During the first weeks I constantly attended these lessons in my tutor's room; but as they appeared equally devoid of profit and pleasure I was once tempted to try the experiment of a formal apology. The apology was accepted with a smile. I repeated the offence with less ceremony; the excuse was admitted with the same indulgence: the slightest

Jacques Bernouilli, l'un des grands mathématiciens de l'Europe, en répondant à propos de cette comète aux partisans du préjugé, dit que la chevelure de la comète ne peut être un signe de la colère divine, parce que cette chevelure est éternelle; mais que la queue pourrait en être un."]

[1] [Hurdis in his *Vindication* (p. 24) admits that "the attendance of young men upon their tutors continues for an hour only in every day".]

motive of laziness or indisposition, the most trifling avocation at home or abroad, was allowed as a worthy impediment; nor did my tutor appear conscious of my absence or neglect.[1] Had the hour of lecture been constantly filled, a single hour was a small portion of my academic leisure. No plan of study was recommended for my use; no exercises were prescribed for his inspection; and, at the most precious season of youth, whole days and weeks were suffered to elapse without labour or amusement, without advice or account. I should have listened to the voice of reason and of my tutor; his mild behaviour had gained my confidence. I preferred his society to that of the younger students[2]; and in our evening walks to the top of Heddington Hill,[3] we freely conversed on a variety of subjects. Since the days of Pocock and Hyde, Oriental learning has always been the pride of

[1] [Pattison, in his article on F. A. Wolf (*Essays*, i., 342), excuses Gibbon's tutors. "Wolf's masters," he writes, "connived at his absence, judging, like Gibbon's Magdalen tutors, that his time would be better employed elsewhere."

The late Rev. C. W. Boase, Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and University Reader in Foreign History, a man full of learning and full of kindliness, told me that Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, both members of his College, had been his pupils. They were by no means regular in attending his lectures, but he let them go their own ways, as he saw that they knew how to teach themselves much better than he could have done it for them.]

[2] ["Mr. Finden, an ancient Fellow of the College, and a contemporary of Gibbon, told me (wrote Dr. Routh) that his superior abilities were known to many, but that the gentlemen-commoners were disposed to laugh at his peculiarities; and were once informed by Finden that if their heads were entirely scooped, Gibbon had brains sufficient to supply them all" (*The Decline*, ed. Milman, 1854, i., 32).

Parr describes Gibbon as entering college "with a weakly frame of body, with a coldness of temperament, which made him stand aloof from the gaiety of companions, and from the generous sympathy of friends" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 582). Gibbon speaks of his "awkward timidity" in his youth (*post*, p. 86).]

[3] [Hearne recorded on Feb. 22, 1723-4: "Upon the top of Heddington Hill, on the left hand as we go to Heddington, just at the brow of the branch of the Roman way that falls down upon Marston Lane, is an elm, that is commonly known by the name of Jo. Pullen's tree, it having been planted by the care of the late Mr. Josiah Pullen of Magdalen Hall, who used to walk to that place every day, sometimes twice a day, if tolerable weather, from Magdalen Hall and back again in the space of half an hour" (Hearne's *Remains*, ii., 194). Dr. Bliss says in a note on ii., 238: "This tree, mutilated though it be, is still (1856) standing, and may in every sense be deemed university property. First, from the associations belonging to it, and the numerous visitants of early days, as well as of modern times, who have made it their almost daily boundary of exercise." Nothing is now left of it but the lower part of the dead trunk.]

Oxford, and I once expressed an inclination to study Arabic.[1] His prudence discouraged this childish fancy; but he neglected the fair occasion of directing the ardour of a curious mind. During my absence in the summer vacation, Dr. Waldegrave accepted a college living at Washington in Sussex, and on my return I no longer found him at Oxford.[2] From that time I have lost sight of my first tutor; but at the end of thirty years (1781) he was still alive; and the practice of exercise and temperance had entitled him to a healthy old age.

The long recess between the Trinity and Michaelmas terms empties the colleges of Oxford, as well as the courts of Westminster.[3] I spent, at my father's house at Buriton in

[1] [Edward Pocock (*ante*, p. 33) was Professor of Arabic from 1636 to 1691, when he was succeeded by Thomas Hyde, who held the office till 1702. Hearne recorded on April 26, 1706, that "Dr. Hyde's books are mightily bought up in Holland, and other parts of Germany, where they have a great opinion of his learning, especially in Orientals (in which there is no doubt he was the greatest master in Europe), though he was disrespected in Oxford by several men, who now speak well of him" (Hearne's *Remains*, i., 104).

Jones, who entered Oxford in 1764, began to study Arabic under the encouragement of a fellow student. He prevailed on a native of Aleppo to come to Oxford from London and give him lessons (Teignmouth's *Life of Sir W. Jones*, p. 40).]

[2] [Southey wrote of his old tutor: "I believe he led but a melancholy life after he left college; without neighbours, without a family, without a pursuit, he must have felt dismally the want of his old routine, and sorely have missed his pupils, the chapel bells, and the Common Room. A monk is much happier than an old fellow of a college who retires to reside upon a country living" (Southey's *Life and Corres.*, iv., 343).

Dr. Waldegrave, six years after he left Magdalen, wrote to Gibbon: "It will give me great pleasure to see you at Washington; where I am, I thank God, very well and very happy" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 37).]

[3] [Only a quarter of a century earlier there were many students in residence all the year round (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 63, *n.* i.). Johnson, who was absent from college but one week in the long vacation of 1729, wrote of Oxford on August 1, 1775: "The place is now a sullen solitude" (*ib.*, i., 63; Johnson's *Letters*, i., 361).

"Adam Smith resided uninterruptedly in Oxford from July 7, 1740, to August 15, 1746, as the Buttery Books of Balliol College show" (*Wealth of Nations*, ed. J. E. T. Rogers, 1869, vol. i., Preface, p. 7).

James wrote from Queen's College on July 30, 1779: "My staircase is from the noisiest become one of the most peaceful of any in college. I am able to unravel the perplexities of a Greek paragraph without being disturbed by a heavy foot or a caper over my head." On Oct. 7 he wrote: "The university is yet thin and desolate" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, pp. 80, 85). The change was greatly due to better roads and swifter and more frequent stage-coaches.]

Hampshire, the two months of August and September. It is whimsical enough, that as soon as I left Magdalen College, my taste for books began to revive; but it was the same blind and boyish taste for the pursuit of exotic history.[1] Unprovided with original learning, unformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved—to write a book. The title of this first Essay, *The Age of Sesostris*, was perhaps suggested by Voltaire's Age of Lewis XIV. which was new and popular; but my sole object was to investigate the probable date of the life and reign of the conqueror of Asia. I was then enamoured of Sir John Marsham's Canon Chronicus; an elaborate work, of whose merits and defects I was not yet qualified to judge.[2] According to his specious, though narrow plan, I settled my hero about the time of Solomon, in the tenth century before the Christian era. It was therefore incumbent on me, unless I would adopt Sir Isaac Newton's shorter chronology,[3] to remove a formidable objection; and my solution, for a youth of fifteen, is not devoid of ingenuity. In his version of the Sacred Books, Manetho the high priest has identified Sethosis, or Sesostris,

[1] [D. P. (Daniel Prince) wrote to *The Gent. Mag.* on Feb. 4, 1794 (p. 119): "I was Mr. Gibbon's bookseller at Oxford. He was a singular character, and but little connected with the young gentlemen of his College. They admit at Magdalen College only men of fortune; no commoners. One uncommon book for a young man I remember selling to him: *La Bibliothèque Orientale d'Herbelot*, which he seems much to have used for authorities for his Eastern Roman History." "The art and genius of history have ever been unknown to the Asiatics. . . . The *Oriental Library* of a Frenchman would instruct the most learned mufti of the East" (*The Decline*, v., 402). For D'Herbelot see *ante*, p. 45.]

[2] [It was published in 1672. For Gibbon's criticism of it see *Misc. Works*, v., 245.]

[3] [Gibbon, in his *Remarques critiques* on Newton's chronology, written in 1758, says: "Son système de chronologie suffirait seul pour lui assurer l'immortalité" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 152). In *The Decline*, v., 104, writing of Newton's detection of frauds in the text of the *New Testament*, he says: "I have weighed the arguments and may yield to the authority of the first of philosophers, who was deeply skilled in critical and theological studies".

Whiston, Newton's successor at Cambridge in the chair of mathematics, wrote of him in 1749: "He was of the most fearful, cautious and suspicious temper that I ever knew; and had he been alive when I wrote against his chronology, and so thoroughly confuted it that nobody has ever ventured to vindicate it, that I know of, I should not have thought proper to publish it during his lifetime; because I knew his temper so well that I should have expected it would have killed him" (Whiston's *Memoirs*, ed. 1749, p. 294).]

with the elder brother of Danaus, who landed in Greece, according to the Parian Marble,[1] fifteen hundred and ten years before Christ. But in my supposition the high priest is guilty of a voluntary error; flattery is the prolific parent of falsehood. Manetho's History of Egypt is dedicated to Ptolemy Philadelphus, who derived a fabulous or illegitimate pedigree from the Macedonian kings of the race of Hercules. Danaus is the ancestor of Hercules; and after the failure of the elder branch, his descendants, the Ptolemies, are the sole representatives of the royal family, and may claim by inheritance the kingdom which they hold by conquest. Such were my juvenile discoveries; at a riper age I no longer presume to connect the Greek, the Jewish and the Egyptian antiquities, which are lost in a distant cloud. Nor is this the only instance, in which the belief and knowledge of the child are superseded by the more rational ignorance of the man. During my stay at Buriton, my infant labour was diligently prosecuted, without much interruption from company or country diversions; and I already heard the music of public applause. The discovery of my own weakness was the first symptom of taste. On my return to Oxford, the Age of Sesostris was wisely relinquished; but the imperfect sheets remained twenty years at the bottom of a drawer, till, in a general clearance of papers (November, 1772), they were committed to the flames.

After the departure of Dr. Waldegrave, I was transferred, with his other pupils, to his academical heir, whose literary character did not command the respect of the college. Dr. . . . .[2] well remembered that he had a salary to receive, and

[1] [Gibbon, reading Marsham in 1762, recorded: "I cannot help wondering at the blind deference which he pays to the oracular authority of the Parian Marble: *De ea re* (the age of Homer) *non est amplius ambigendum.* I respect that monument as an useful, as an uncorrupt monument of antiquity; but why should I prefer its authority to that of Herodotus, for instance? It is more modern, its authority is uncertain" (*Misc. Works*, v., 245).]

[2] [Thomas Winchester. Archdeacon Churton described him as "a considerable Tutor in the College, when, among others, the ingenious Mr. Lovibond was his pupil. . . . His talents, if not splendid, were sound and good; his attainments various and useful; and he was a true son to the Church of England" (Bloxam's *Register*, iii., pp. 220, 224). Dr. Bloxam adds: "The

only forgot that he had a duty to perform.[1] Instead of guiding the studies, and watching over the behaviour of his disciple, I was never summoned to attend even the ceremony of a lecture; and, excepting one voluntary visit to his rooms, during the eight months of his titular office, the tutor and pupil lived in the same college as strangers to each other. The want of experience, of advice, and of occupation, soon betrayed me into some improprieties of conduct, ill-chosen company, late hours, and inconsiderate expense. My growing debts might be secret; but my frequent absence was visible and scandalous[2]: and a tour to Bath, a visit into Buckinghamshire, and four excursions to London in the same winter, were costly and dangerous frolics. They were, indeed, without a meaning, as without an excuse. The irksomeness of a cloistered life repeatedly tempted me to wander; but my chief pleasure was that of travelling; and I was too young and bashful to enjoy, like a manly Oxonian in town, the pleasures of London.[3] In all these excursions I eloped from

late venerable President [Routh] remembered him coming occasionally to the College Gaudy, and represented him to me as a man of a very florid complexion" (*ib.*, p. 225).]

[1] [According to Bentham, one of the two tutors at Queen's College took pupils for six guineas, and the other took them for eight. "The cheaper was selected by Bentham's father. It mattered little—the difference was only between Bavius and Mævius" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 38). Gibbon, as a gentleman-commoner, paid his tutor twenty guineas (*Auto.*, p. 226). Archibald Macdonald (afterwards Chief Baron of the Exchequer) wrote from Christ Church in 1769: "From the college tutor very little is to be expected. He does not interfere at all with the expense of his pupil, not a great deal with his Latin and Greek, far less with his progress in the sciences. The Gentleman-Commoner pays his tutor twenty guineas per annum. The Commoner eight" (*Letters of Johnson*, i., 419). John Wesley, who had been a tutor of Lincoln College twenty years before Gibbon entered Magdalen, said: "I should have thought myself little better than a highwayman if I had not lectured my pupils every day in the year but Sundays" (Wesley's *Journals*, ed. 1827, iv., 75).]

[2] [Hurdis, with matchless impudence, thus defends Magdalen: "In a large college the absence of an individual, especially of Mr. Gibbon's dimensions, might not have been visible, as he incorrectly asserts it must have been. . . . It was Magdalen College which made him fly from the stately edifices of Oxford to an old inconvenient tenement in Lausanne. Whatever application, sobriety and literary desert were consequent, must be referred to this, salutary, though severe, proof of discipline still alive and still endued with energy in Magdalen College" (Hurdis's *Vindication*, pp. 5, 9).]

[3] [The prologue to Colman's *The Oxonian in Town* (1769) was spoken by "Mr. Woodward, in the character of a Gentleman-Commoner". . . . The scene opens at the door of a tavern in Covent Garden where two Oxonians have just

Oxford; I returned to college; in a few days I eloped again, as if I had been an independent stranger in a hired lodging, without once hearing the voice of admonition, without once feeling the hand of controul. Yet my time was lost, my expenses were multiplied, my behaviour abroad was unknown; folly as well as vice should have awakened the attention of my superiors, and my tender years would have justified a more than ordinary degree of restraint and discipline.[1]

It might at least be expected, that an ecclesiastical school should inculcate the orthodox principles of religion. But our venerable mother had contrived to unite the opposite extremes of bigotry and indifference[2]; an heretic, or unbeliever, was a monster in her eyes; but she was always, or often, or sometimes remiss in the spiritual education of her own children.[3] According to the statutes of the university, every student, before he is matriculated, must subscribe his assent to the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, which are signed by more than read, and read by more than believe them. My insufficient age excused me, however, from the immediate performance of this legal ceremony, and the Vice-Chancellor directed me to return, as soon as I should have accomplished my fifteenth year; recommending me, in the meanwhile, to the instruction of my college. My college

arrived. One says to the other: "Let's in. Perhaps we shall meet with some Oxford acquaintance, for I know that Bob Lounge and Dick Scamper drew for their quarterage but two days ago; and they always spend the first week after they receive it in Covent Garden."]

[1] [See Appendix 15.]

[2] ['The general indifference of the Church at this time is shown by a letter Whiston received in 1730 from "a worthy friend" of his living in Durham, who wrote to him: "For near two years last past there hath not been one Bishop appeared amongst us in all the North part of England" (Whiston's *Memoirs*, p. 337).]

[3] [James wrote, on May 19, 1781: "The new regulations introduced by the Vice-Chancellor extend only to petty irregularities, whilst the weightier matters of the law are disregarded. It is in these in particular that our superiors are very exact and profuse of rebuke. Thus very lately a man was *imposed* [given an imposition] for having missed chapel, while others were suffered to get drunk without any but a trifling verbal reprimand" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, p. 141). See also Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 13, *n.* 3. "To a philosophic eye the vices of the clergy are far less dangerous than their virtues" (*The Decline*, v., 299).]

forgot to instruct: I forgot to return, and was myself forgotten by the first magistrate of the university.[1] Without a single lecture, either public or private, either Christian or Protestant, without any academical subscription, without any episcopal confirmation, I was left by the dim light of my catechism to grope my way to the chapel and communion-table, where I was admitted, without a question, how far, or by what means, I might be qualified to receive the sacrament. Such almost incredible neglect was productive of the worst mischiefs. From my childhood I had been fond of religious disputation: my poor aunt has been often puzzled by the mysteries which she strove to believe; nor had the elastic spring been totally broken by the weight of the atmosphere of Oxford. The blind activity of idleness urged me to advance without armour into the dangerous mazes of controversy; and at the age of sixteen, I bewildered myself in the errors of the Church of Rome.

The progress of my conversion may tend to illustrate, at least, the history of my own mind. It was not long since Dr. Middleton's *Free Enquiry* had sounded an alarm in the theological world: much ink and much gall had been spilt in the defence of the primitive miracles[2]; and the two dullest of their champions were crowned with academic honours by the university of Oxford.[3] The name of Middleton was unpopular;

[1] [See Appendix 16.]

[2] [Dr. Conyers Middleton's *Free Enquiry into the Miraculous Powers which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian Church from the Earliest Ages through Several Successive Centuries* was published in 1749. He had preceded it in 1747 by an *Introductory Discourse*.

Gibbon, reading the book in 1764, recorded of the author: "This man was endowed with penetration and accuracy. He saw where his principles led; but he did not think proper to draw the consequences" (*Misc. Works*, v., 463).

"The miracles of the primitive Church, after obtaining the sanction of ages, have been lately attacked in a very free and ingenious inquiry; which, though it has met with the most favourable reception from the Public, appears to have excited a general scandal among the divines of our own as well as of the other Protestant Churches of Europe" (*The Decline*, ii., 29).

In *The Gent. Mag.*, 1749, pp. 96, 161, 240, 288, 480, 528, there is mention of seven works on this controversy; and in 1750, pp. 48, 96, 144, 192, 240, 528, 576, of twenty.]

[3] [Dr. Dodwell and Dr. Church. "On this, indeed," writes Middleton, "they have great reason to plume themselves, but would have had much greater, if that learned body could stamp the truth of opinions by the same seal with which it stamps diplomas" (Middleton, *Misc. Works*, ed. 1752, i., 290).]

and his proscription very naturally led me to peruse his writings, and those of his antagonists. His bold criticism, which approaches the precipice of infidelity,[1] produced on my mind a singular effect; and had I persevered in the communion of Rome, I should not apply to my own fortune the prediction of the Sibyl,

——— Via prima salutis,
Quod minimè reris, Graiâ pandetur ab urbe.[2]

The elegance of style and freedom of argument were repelled by a shield of prejudice. I still revered the character, or rather the names, of the saints and fathers whom Dr. Middleton exposes; nor could he destroy my implicit belief that the gift of miraculous powers was continued in the church, during the first four or five centuries of Christianity.[3] But I was unable to resist the weight of historical evidence, that within the same period most of the leading doctrines of popery were already introduced in theory and practice: nor was my conclusion absurd, that miracles are the test of truth, and that the church must be orthodox and pure, which was so often approved by the visible interposition of the Deity. The

[1] [Gibbon wrote in 1779: "A theological barometer might be formed of which Cardinal Baronius and our countryman Dr. Middleton should constitute the opposite and remote extremities, as the former sunk to the lowest degree of credulity which was compatible with learning, and the latter rose to the highest pitch of scepticism in anywise consistent with religion. The intermediate gradations would be filled by a line of ecclesiastical critics, whose rank has been fixed by the circumstances of their temper and studies, as well as by the spirit of the church or society to which they were attached. It would be amusing enough to calculate the weight of prejudice in the air of Rome, of Oxford, of Paris, and of Holland; and sometimes to observe the irregular tendency of Papists towards freedom, sometimes to remark the unnatural gravitation of Protestants towards slavery" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 588).]

[2] [*Æneid*, vi., 96.

"The dawnings of thy safety shall be shown
From whence thou least shalt hope, a Grecian town."

(Dryden.)]

[3] ["The conversion of Constantine is the era which is most usually fixed by Protestants [of the withdrawal of miraculous powers from the Church]. The more rational divines are unwilling to admit the miracles of the fourth, whilst the more credulous are unwilling to reject those of the fifth century" (*The Decline*, ii., 30). Whiston, the Unitarian, published in 1749 *An Account of the Exact Time when Miraculous Gifts Ceased in the Church*. He placed it (p. 9) "just at, or after, the Council of Constantinople [A.D. 381]".]

marvellous tales which are so boldly attested by the Basils and Chrysostoms, the Austins and Jeroms, compelled me to embrace the superior merits of celibacy, the institution of the monastic life,[1] the use of the sign of the cross, of holy oil, and even of images,[2] the invocation of saints,[3] the worship of relics, the rudiments of purgatory in prayers for the dead,[4] and the tremendous mystery of the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, which insensibly swelled into the prodigy of transubstantiation. In these dispositions, and already more than half a convert, I formed an unlucky intimacy with a young gentleman of our college, whose name I shall spare. With a character less resolute, Mr. ——[5] had imbibed the same religious opinions; and some Popish books, I know not through what channel, were conveyed into his possession. I read, I applauded, I believed;[6] the English translations of two famous works of Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, the Exposition of the Catholic Doctrine,[7] and the History of

[1] [*Ante*, p. 57, *n.* 1.]

[2] [Writing of the introduction of images into the Church he says: "The fond alliance of the monks and females obtained a final victory over the reason and authority of man" (*The Decline*, v., 276).]

[3] ["The title of *saint* is a mark that his opinions and his party have finally prevailed" (*ib.*, v., 107). "Bernard seems to have preserved as much reason and humanity as may be reconciled with the character of a saint" (*ib.*, vi., 333).]

[4] [Some ten or twelve years after he left Oxford Gibbon thus wrote of the Church of the fifteenth century: "If we turn from letters to religion the Christian must grieve, and the philosopher will smile. By a propensity natural to man the multitude had easily relapsed into the grossest polytheism. The existence of a Supreme Being was indeed acknowledged; his mysterious attributes were minutely, and even indecently, canvassed in the schools; but he was allowed a very small share in the public worship, or the administration of the universe. The devotion of the people was directed to the Saints and the Virgin Mary, the delegates and almost the partners, of his authority. . . . New legends and new practices of superstition were daily invented by the interested diligence of the mendicant friars; and as this religion had scarcely any connection with morality, every sin was expiated by penance, and every penance *indulgently* commuted into a fine" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 54).]

[5] [Gibbon does not give the name. In the second edition Lord Sheffield filled up the blank with "Mr. Molesworth". The name is not given in *Alumni Oxon.*; neither, the President tells me, is it in the College books.]

[6] [It was in March, 1753, that his conversion began (*Auto.*, p. 296).]

[7] [*Exposition de la Doctrine de l'Eglise Catholique sur les Matières de Controverse.* Paris, 1671. An English translation was printed at Paris the following year. Hearne (*Remains*, i., 58) says that the *Exposition* was "translated into English by Mr. Dryden, then only a poet, afterwards a

the Protestant Variations,[1] achieved my conversion, and I surely fell by a noble hand.[2] I have since examined the originals with a more discerning eye, and shall not hesitate to pronounce that Bossuet is indeed a master of all the weapons of controversy. In the Exposition, a specious apology, the orator assumes, with consummate art, the tone of candour and simplicity; and the ten-horned monster is transformed, at his magic touch, into the milk-white hind, who must be loved as soon as she is seen.[3] In the History, a bold and well-aimed attack, he displays, with a happy mixture of narrative and argument, the faults and follies, the changes and contradictions of our first reformers; whose variations (as he dexterously contends) are the mark of historical error, while the perpetual unity of the catholic church is the sign and test of infallible truth.[4] To my present feelings it seems incredible that I should ever believe

papist, and may be so before, though not known". Though James II. made a miserable waste of Dryden's time by withdrawing him from poetry to the translation of controversial books, Bossuet's *Exposition* was not done by him. "Perhaps," to quote Johnson's words when he is speaking of the attribution to Dryden of another translation, "Perhaps the use of his name was a pious fraud" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 279).]

[1] [*Histoire des Variations des Eglises Protestantes.* 2 vols., quarto. Paris, 1688. An English translation of the sixth edition was printed at Antwerp in 1742. It was reprinted in Dublin in 1829.
"La gloire de Bossuet est devenue l'une des religions de la France" (Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries*, x., 180).]

[2] Mr. Gibbon never talked with me on the subject of his conversion to popery but once: and then he imputed his change to the works of Parsons the Jesuit, who lived in the reign of Elizabeth, and who, he said, had urged all the best arguments in favour of the Roman Catholic religion.—SHEFFIELD.
[In Lowndes's *Bibl. Man.*, p. 1790, six columns are given to the works of Robert Parsons.]

[3] ["A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged;
. . . . . .
'Tis true she bounded by, and tripped so light,
They had not time to take a steady sight;
For truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen."
(Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther*, part i., ll. 1, 31.)]

[4] ["One in herself, not rent by schism, but sound,
Entire, one solid shining diamond;
Not sparkles shattered into sects like you:
One is the Church, and must be to be true."
(*Ib.*, part ii., l. 526.)]

that I believed in transubstantiation.[1] But my conqueror oppressed me with the sacramental words, "Hoc est corpus meum," and dashed against each other the figurative half-meanings of the protestant sects;[2] every objection was resolved into omnipotence; and after repeating at St. Mary's the Athanasian creed,[3] I humbly acquiesced in the mystery of the real presence.

> To take up half on trust, and half to try,
> Name it not faith, but bungling bigotry;
> Both knave and fool, the merchant we may call,
> To pay great sums, and to compound the small,
> For who would break with Heaven, and would not break for all?[4]

No sooner had I settled my new religion than I resolved to profess myself a catholic. Youth is sincere and impetuous; and a momentary glow of enthusiasm had raised me above all temporal considerations.[5]

By the keen protestants, who would gladly retaliate the example of persecution, a clamour is raised of the increase of popery: and they are always loud to declaim against the

[1] [Gibbon, writing of Pope Innocent III., says: "It was at the feet of his legate that John of England surrendered his crown; and Innocent may boast of the two most signal triumphs over sense and humanity, the establishment of transubstantiation, and the origin of the Inquisition" (*The Decline*, vi., 355). In *The Outlines of the History of the World*, written many years earlier, Gibbon had thus expressed the same thought: "By establishing the doctrine of transubstantiation and the tribunal of the Inquisition, Innocent III. obtained the two most memorable victories over the common sense and common rights of mankind" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 21). In the same Essay he speaks of Lewis IX. as being "disgraced by the title of Saint" (*ib.*, p. 25). For Gibbon's spelling of *transubstantiation* see *Auto.*, pp. 86, 128, 137.]

[2] [I do not find that Bossuet in his *Exposition* (pp. 79-152) anywhere quotes the Latin. He frequently repeats "Ceci est mon corps". His adversaries he always describes as "Messieurs de la Religion Prétendue Réformée". He examines the same question in the History, bks. ii., vi., xiv.]

[3] ["The three following truths, however surprising they may seem, are *now* universally acknowledged: 1. St. Athanasius is not the author of the creed which is so frequently read in our churches. 2. It does not appear to have existed within a century after his death. 3. It was originally composed in the Latin tongue, and consequently in the Western Provinces. Gennadius, Patriarch of Constantinople, was so much amazed by this extraordinary composition that he frankly pronounced it to be the work of a drunken man" (*The Decline*, iv., 89).]

[4] [*The Hind and the Panther*, i., 141.]

[5] He described the letter to his father, announcing his conversion, as written with all the pomp, the dignity, and self-satisfaction of a martyr.—SHEFFIELD.

toleration of priests and jesuits, who pervert so many of his majesty's subjects from their religion and allegiance.[1] On the present occasion, the fall of one or more of her sons directed this clamour against the university: and it was confidently affirmed that popish missionaries were suffered, under various disguises, to introduce themselves into the colleges of Oxford. But justice obliges me to declare, that, as far as relates to myself, this assertion is false; and that I never conversed with a priest, or even with a papist, till my resolution from books was absolutely fixed.[2] In my last excursion to London, I addressed myself to Mr. Lewis,[3] a Roman catholic bookseller in Russell Street,[4] Covent Garden, who recommended me to a priest, of whose name and order I am at present ignorant.[5] In our first interview he soon discovered that persuasion was needless. After sounding the motives and merits of my conversion, he consented to admit me into the pale of the church; and at his feet, on the eighth of June, 1753, I solemnly, though privately, abjured the errors of

[1] [" Under the reign of Lewis XIV. his subjects of every rank aspired to the glorious title of *Convertisseur*, expressive of their zeal and success in making proselytes. The word and the idea are growing obsolete in France; may they never be introduced into England!" (*The Decline*, ii., 451.)]

[2] [" Cette conversion solitaire et *toute par les livres* caractérise bien Gibbon" (*Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 437).]

[3] [" He died in 1802. He used to relate that his father was a schoolfellow with Pope" (Nichols's *Lit. Anec.*, iii., 646).]

[4] [It was at the shop of a bookseller in the same street (No. 8) that, on May 16, 1763, Boswell first saw Johnson (Boswell's *Johnson*, i. 390).

Mary Lamb wrote to Miss Wordsworth on Nov. 21, 1817: "Here we are, living at a brazier's shop, No. 20, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, a place all alive with noise and bustle; Drury Lane Theatre in sight from our front and Covent Garden from our back windows". Charles Lamb wrote on the same day: "We are in the individual spot I like best in all this great city. The theatres, with all their noises. Covent Garden, dearer to me than any gardens of Alcinous, where we are morally sure of the earliest peas and 'sparagus. Bow Street, where the thieves are examined, within a few yards of us. Mary had not been here four and twenty hours before she saw a thief. She sits at the window working; and casually throwing out her eyes, she sees a concourse of people coming this way with a constable to conduct the solemnity. These little incidents agreeably diversify a female life" (Lamb's *Letters*, ed. 1888, ii., 6, 8).]

[5] His name was Baker, a Jesuit, and one of the chaplains of the Sardinian ambassador. Mr. Gibbon's conversion made some noise, and Mr. Lewis was summoned before the Privy Council and interrogated on the subject. This was communicated by Mr. Lewis's son, 1814.—SHEFFIELD.

heresy. The seduction of an English youth of family and fortune was an act of as much danger as glory; but he bravely overlooked the danger, of which I was not then sufficiently informed. "Where a person is reconciled to the see of Rome, or procures others to be reconciled, the offence (says Blackstone) amounts to high treason."[1] And if the humanity of the age would prevent the execution of this sanguinary statute, there were other laws of a less odious cast, which condemned the priest to perpetual imprisonment, and transferred the proselyte's estate to his nearest relation.[2] An elaborate controversial epistle, approved by my director, and addressed to my father, announced and justified the step which I had taken. My father was neither a bigot nor a philosopher; but his affection deplored the loss of an only son; and his good sense was astonished at my strange departure from the religion of my country. In the first sally of passion he divulged a secret which prudence might have suppressed, and the gates of Magdalen College were for ever shut against my return.[3] Many years afterwards, when the name of Gibbon was become as notorious as that of Middleton, it was industriously whispered at Oxford, that the historian had formerly "turned Papist";[4] my character stood exposed to the reproach of inconstancy; and this invidious topic would have been handled

[1] ["Where these errors are also aggravated by apostacy or perversion, where a person," etc. (Blackstone's *Comm.*, ed. 1775, iv., 56).]

[2] [See Appendix 17.]

[3] ["As to the secret," asks Parr, "if it had been kept, did Mr. Gibbon, the convert, mingle so little sincerity with his zeal as to be capable of returning to Magdalen, even if he had not been forbidden to return?" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 572.) Gibbon wrote to his aunt on Sept. 20, 1755: "My scheme would be to spend this winter at Lausanne . . . and after that, finish my studies either at Cambridge (for after what has passed one cannot think of Oxford) or at an university in Holland" (*Misc. Works*, i., 98).]

[4] [Gibbon no doubt refers to the following passage in Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 447: "We talked of a work much in vogue at that time . . . which, under pretext of another subject, contained much artful infidelity. . . . The author had been an Oxonian, and was remembered there for having 'turned Papist'. I observed, that as he had changed several times—from the Church of England to the Church of Rome,—from the Church of Rome to infidelity,—I did not despair yet of seeing him a methodist preacher. JOHNSON (laughing). 'It is said, that his range has been more extensive, and that he has once been Mahometan.'" For Macaulay's explanation of the rumour that Gibbon had been a Mahometan see his *Essays*, ed. 1874, i., 373, *n.*]

without mercy by my opponents, could they have separated my cause from that of the university. For my own part, I am proud of an honest sacrifice of interest to conscience. I can never blush, if my tender mind was entangled in the sophistry that seduced the acute and manly understandings of CHILLINGWORTH and BAYLE, who afterwards emerged from superstition to scepticism.

While Charles the First governed England, and was himself governed by a Catholic queen, it cannot be denied that the missionaries of Rome laboured with impunity and success in the Court, the country, and even the universities. One of the sheep,

> —— Whom the grim wolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace, and nothing said,[1]

is Mr. William Chillingworth, Master of Arts, and Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford; who, at the ripe age of twenty-eight years, was persuaded to elope from Oxford, to the English seminary at Douay in Flanders. Some disputes with Fisher, a subtle Jesuit, might first awaken him from the prejudices of education; but he yielded to his own victorious argument, "that there must be somewhere an infallible judge; and that the Church of Rome is the only Christian society which either does or can pretend to that character".[2] After

[1] ["What the grim wolf," etc. (*Lycidas*, l. 128). In *The Hind and the Panther* the "insatiate wolf" is the Presbyterian Church.]

[2] ["The study and conversation of the university scholars at that time turned chiefly upon the controversies between the Church of England and that of Rome; and the great liberty which had been allowed the Popish missionaries in the end of the reign of King James I. being continued under King Charles I., upon the account of his marriage with Henrietta, daughter to Henry IV. of France. There was among them a famous Jesuit, who went under the name of John Fisher, though his true name was John Perse, or Percey, and was very busy in making converts, particularly at Oxford; and attacking Mr. Chillingworth upon the necessity of an infallible living judge in matters of faith, the latter forsook the communion of the Church of England." Chillingworth on his conversion wrote to Sheldon, asking him: "1. Whether it be not evident from Scripture, and Fathers, and reason; from the goodness of God and the necessity of mankind, that there must be some one Church infallible in matters of faith? 2. Whether there be any society of men in the world, besides the Church of Rome, that either can, upon good warrant, or indeed at all, challenge to itself the privilege of infallibility in matter of faith?" (Birch's *Life of Chillingworth* prefixed to Chillingworth's *Works*, ed. 1820, i., 2. See also *ib.*, iii., 428, for *An Account of what moved the Author to turn Papist.*)

a short trial of a few months, Mr. Chillingworth was again tormented by religious scruples: he returned home, resumed his studies, unravelled his mistakes, and delivered his mind from the yoke of authority and superstition. His new creed was built on the principle, that the Bible is our sole judge, and private reason our sole interpreter: and he ably maintains this principle in the Religion of a Protestant, a book which, after startling the doctors of Oxford, is still esteemed the most solid defence of the Reformation.[1] The learning, the virtue, the recent merits of the author, entitled him to fair preferment: but the slave had now broken his fetters; and the more he weighed, the less was he disposed to subscribe to the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England. In a private letter he declares, with all the energy of language, that he could not subscribe to them without subscribing to his own damnation; and that if ever he should depart from this immoveable resolution, he would allow his friends to think him a madman, or an atheist.[2] As the letter

Dryden spreads this argument over the second part of *The Hind and the Panther*.

Johnson, writing of Dryden's conversion to Popery, says: "Chillingworth himself was awhile so entangled in the wilds of controversy as to retire for quiet to an infallible Church" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 278).

"I would be a Papist if I could," said Johnson. "I have fear enough; but an obstinate rationality prevents me" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 289).]

[1] [Gibbon's first tutor at Magdalen wrote to him on Dec. 7, 1758, after his reconversion: "Had I in the least suspected your design of leaving us, I should immediately have put you upon reading Mr. Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants;* any one page of which is worth a library of Swiss divinity" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 37).

Clarendon, describing "the felicity of the times before the Long Parliament," mentions: "The Protestant religion more advanced against the Church of Rome by writing, especially by those two books of the late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury his Grace, and of Mr. Chillingworth, than it had been from the Reformation" (*History of the Rebellion*, ed. 1826, i., 134).]

[2] [In this letter, addressed to Sheldon, he wrote: "The case stands so with me, and I can see no remedy but for ever it will do so, that if I subscribe, I subscribe my own damnation. . . . I will never undervalue the happiness which God's love brings to me with it, as to put it to the least adventure in the world, for the gaining of any worldly happiness. I remember very well *quærite primum regnum Dei, et cætera omnia adjicientur tibi;* and therefore, whenever I make such a preposterous choice, I will give you leave to think I am out of my wits, or do not believe in God, or at least am so unreasonable as to do a thing, in hope I shall be sorry for it afterwards, and wish it undone" (Chillingworth's *Works*, i., 15, 17).]

is without a date, we cannot ascertain the number of weeks or months that elapsed between this passionate abhorrence and the Salisbury Register, which is still extant. "Ego Gulielmus Chillingworth, . . . omnibus hisce articulis, . . . et singulis in iisdem contentis volens, et ex animo subscribo, et consensum meum iisdem præbeo. 20 die Julii 1638."[1] But, alas! the chancellor and prebendary of Sarum soon deviated from his own subscription: as he more deeply scrutinized the article of the Trinity, neither scripture nor the primitive fathers could long uphold his orthodox belief; and he could not but confess, "that the doctrine of Arius is either a truth, or at least no damnable heresy".[2] From this middle region of the air, the descent of his reason would naturally rest on the firmer ground of the Socinians: and if we may credit a doubtful story, and the popular opinion, his anxious inquiries at last subsided in philosophic indifference. So conspicuous, however, were the candour of his nature and the innocence of his heart, that this apparent levity did not affect the reputation of Chillingworth. His frequent changes proceeded from too nice an inquisition into truth. His doubts grew out of himself; he assisted them with all the strength of his reason: he was then too hard for himself; but finding as little quiet and repose in those victories, he quickly recovered, by a new appeal to his own judgment: so that in all his sallies and retreats, he was in fact his own convert.

Bayle was the son of a Calvinist minister in a remote province of France, at the foot of the Pyrenees. For the benefit of education, the Protestants were tempted to risk their children in the Catholic universities; and in the twenty-second year of his age, young Bayle was seduced by the arts and arguments of the Jesuits of Toulouse. He remained about seventeen months (19th March, 1669—19th August, 1670) in their hands, a voluntary captive: and a letter to his parents, which the new convert composed or subscribed

[1] [Chillingworth's *Works*, Preface, p. xii.] [2] [*Ib.*, i., 12.]

(15th April, 1670), is darkly tinged with the spirit of popery. But Nature had designed him to think as he pleased, and to speak as he thought: his piety was offended by the excessive worship of creatures,[1] and the study of physics convinced him of the impossibility of transubstantiation, which is abundantly refuted by the testimony of our senses. His return to the communion of a falling sect was a bold and disinterested step, that exposed him to the rigour of the laws: and a speedy flight to Geneva protected him from the resentment of his spiritual tyrants, unconscious as they were of the full value of the prize which they had lost. Had Bayle adhered to the Catholic Church, had he embraced the ecclesiastical profession, the genius and favour[2] of such a proselyte might have aspired to wealth and honours in his native country: but the hyprocite would have found less happiness in the comforts of a benefice, or the dignity of a mitre, than he enjoyed at Rotterdam in a private state of exile, indigence, and freedom. Without a country, or a patron, or a prejudice, he claimed the liberty and subsisted by the labours of his pen: the inequality of his voluminous works is explained and excused by his alternately writing for himself, for the booksellers, and for posterity; and if a severe critic would reduce him to a single folio,[3] that relic, like the books of the Sibyl, would become still more

[1] ["Among the Barbarians of the West the worship of images advanced with a silent and insensible progress; but a large atonement is made for their hesitation and delay by the gross idolatry of the ages which precede the Reformation, and of the countries, both in Europe and America, which are still immersed in the gloom of superstition" (*The Decline*, v., 279).]

[2] [*Quære* fervour.]

[3] [Voltaire, dans *Le Temple du Goût*, describing "la bibliothèque de ce palais enchanté," continues: "Tout l'esprit de Bayle se trouve dans un seul tome, de son propre aveu; car ce judicieux philosophe, ce juge éclairé de tant d'auteurs et de tant de sectes, disait souvent qu'il n'aurait pas composé plus d'un in-folio s'il n'avait écrit que pour lui, et non pour les libraires" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, x., 160).

In a letter dated "21 Juin, 1739," Voltaire wrote: "Quel a donc été mon but, en réduisant en un seul tome le bel esprit de Bayle? De faire sentir ce qu'il pensait lui-même, ce qu'il dit et écrit à M. Desmaizeaux, ce que j'ai vu de sa main: qu'il aurait écrit moins s'il eût été le maître de son temps" (*ib.*, xlvii., 403). In another passage Voltaire described Bayle as "cet esprit, si étendu, si sage et si pénétrant, dont les livres, tout diffus qu'ils peuvent être, seront à jamais la bibliothèque des nations" (*ib.*, xliii., 208).]

valuable. A calm and lofty spectator of the religious tempest, the philosopher of Rotterdam condemned with equal firmness the persecution of Lewis the Fourteenth, and the republican maxims of the Calvinists; their vain prophecies, and the intolerant bigotry which sometimes vexed his solitary retreat. In reviewing the controversies of the times, he turned against each other the arguments of the disputants[1]; successively wielding the arms of the Catholics and Protestants, he proves that neither the way of authority, nor the way of examination can afford the multitude any test of religious truth; and dexterously concludes that custom and education must be the sole grounds of popular belief.[2] The ancient paradox of Plutarch, that atheism is less pernicious than superstition,[3] acquires a tenfold vigour, when it is adorned with the colours of his wit, and pointed with the acuteness of his logic. His critical dictionary is a vast repository of facts

[1] [Gibbon recorded on April 4, 1764: "I finished Bayle's *General Criticism on Maimbourg's History of Calvinism.* No man was ever better qualified than Bayle for assuming the character of his adversary, showing his system in a new garb, and for availing himself of all places open to assault; which is one of the greatest advantages of the sceptical philosophy" (*Misc. Works*, v., 480).]

[2] ["By education most have been misled;
So they believe, because they so were bred.
The priest continues what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man."
(Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther*, iii., 389.)

"BOSWELL. 'Then the vulgar, Sir, never can know they are right, but must submit themselves to the learned.' JOHNSON. 'To be sure, Sir. The vulgar are the children of the State, and must be taught like children.' BOSWELL. 'Then, Sir, a poor Turk must be a Mahometan, just as a poor Englishman must be a Christian?' JOHNSON. 'Why, yes, Sir; and what then? This now is such stuff as I used to talk to my mother when I first began to think myself a clever fellow; and she ought to have whipt me for it'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 14).]

[3] ["When Alexander had once abandoned himself to superstition, his mind was so worried by vain fears and anxieties that he turned the least incident which was in any respect strange and extraordinary into a sign or a prodigy. The Court swarmed with sacrificers, purifiers, and prognosticators; these were all to be seen exercising their talents there. So true it is, that though the disbelief of religion and contempt of things divine is a great evil, yet superstition is a greater" (Langhorne's *Plutarch's Lives*, ed. 1809, iv., 310). Gibbon, recording in 1764 that he had read *Remarks on Bayle's Dictionary*, added: "Intolerant superstition is more dangerous than impiety" (*Misc. Works*, v., 462).

"L'athéisme ne peut faire aucun bien à la morale, et peut lui faire beaucoup de mal. Il est presque aussi dangereux que le fanatisme" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xlii., 245).]

and opinions,[1] and he balances the *false* religions[2] in his sceptical scales, till the opposite quantities (if I may use the language of algebra) annihilate each other. The wonderful power which he so boldly exercised, of assembling doubts and objections, had tempted him jocosely to assume the title of the νεφεληγερετα Ζευς, the cloud-compelling Jove; and in a conversation with the ingenious Abbé (afterwards Cardinal) de Polignac, he freely disclosed his universal Pyrrhonism. "I am most truly (said Bayle) a protestant; for I protest indifferently against all systems and all sects."[3]

The academical resentment, which I may possibly have provoked, will prudently spare this plain narrative of my studies, or rather of my idleness; and of the unfortunate event which shortened the term of my residence at Oxford. But it may be suggested, that my father was unlucky in the choice of a society, and the chance of a tutor.[4] It will perhaps be asserted, that in the lapse of forty years many improvements have taken place in the college and in the university. I am not unwilling to believe, that some tutors might have been found more active than Dr. Waldegrave, and less contemptible than Dr. ——.[5] About the same time,

[1] [*Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 1696. English translation in 4 vols., folio, 1710. Gibbon recorded in his Journal in 1762: "If Bayle wrote his Dictionary to empty the various collections he had made, without any particular design, he could not have chosen a better plan. It permitted him everything, and obliged him to nothing. By the double freedom of a dictionary and of notes he could pitch on what articles he pleased, and say what he pleased on those articles" (*Misc. Works*, v., 238. See Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 425).]

[2] [What Gibbon meant by "the *false* religions" is shown in one of his Memoirs, where he writes that "Bayle balanced the religions of the earth" (*Auto.*, p. 129).]

[3] ["Il est rapporté dans un de ces *dictionnaires historiques*, où la vérité est si souvent mêlée avec le mensonge, que le cardinal de Polignac, en passant par Rotterdam, demanda à Bayle s'il était anglican ou luthérien, ou calviniste, et qu'il répondit, *Je suis protestant; car je proteste contre toutes les religions.*" Voltaire, after giving three reasons to prove this story false, continues: "Il est vrai que Bayle avait dit quelquefois ce qu'on lui fait dire: il ajoutait qu'il était comme Jupiter assemble-nuages d'Homère" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xlii., 211).]

[4] ["Often," writes Parr, "has it fallen in my way to lament the inconveniences which young men have suffered from a wrong choice of Colleges; and for a wrong choice I have often been able to account by the partialities of parents who have been at the Universities" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 560).]

[5] [Winchester. The next three paragraphs, which appeared in the first edition, were suppressed in the second. In *Auto.*, p. 93, they are wrongly marked as "hitherto unpublished".]

and in the same walk, a Bentham was still treading in the footsteps of a Burton, whose maxims he had adopted, and whose life he had published. The biographer indeed preferred the school-logic to the new philosophy, Burgersdicius to Locke;[1] and the hero appears, in his own writings, a stiff and conceited pedant. Yet even these men, according to the measure of their capacity, might be diligent and useful; and it is recorded of Burton, that he taught his pupils what he knew; some Latin, some Greek, some ethics and metaphysics; referring them to proper masters for the languages and sciences of which he was ignorant.[2] At a more recent period, many students have been attracted by the merit and reputation of Sir William Scott, then a tutor in University College, and now conspicuous in the profession of the civil law: my personal acquaintance with that gentleman has inspired me with a just esteem for his abilities and knowledge; and I am assured that his lectures on history would compose, were they given to the public, a most valuable treatise.[3] Under the auspices of the present Archbishop of York, Dr. Markham,[4] himself an eminent scholar, a more regular discipline has been introduced, as I am told, at Christ Church;[5] a course of classical and

[1] [Gibbon quotes Edward Bentham's *De Vita et Moribus Johannis Burtoni*. Oxon., 1771. Burton taught Locke. "Burtonus Lockium aliosque recentioris notæ Philosophos in Scholas adduxit, comites Aristotele non indignos" (p. 15). I find no mention of Burgersdicius. Perhaps Gibbon refers to Bentham's *Reflexions upon Logick*, ed. 1755, p. 7, where the author, after saying that "the Logical Theory contained in Mr. Locke's *Essay*, so far as it goes, generally coincides with that of the Schools," adds that the perusal of the *Essay* had better "be postponed until a man hath regularly received a competent degree of knowledge from its proper sources".

Mr. Shandy was a great logician though he had never "heard one single lecture upon Burgersdicius" (*Tristam Shandy*, bk. i., ch. 19). Warburton, in a note on "He knew what's what" (*Hudibras*, part i., canto i., line. 149) says: "It is a ridicule on Burgersdicius's *Quid est quid?* whence came the expression of 'He knows what's what,' to denote a shrewd man".]

[2] [*De Vita*, etc., p. 15.]

[3] [For the lectures of Scott and Blackstone see Appendix 18.]

[4] [In the second edition Lord Sheffield changed this into "Under the auspices of the late Deans". In Parr's *Works*, i., 322, there is an interesting discussion about the merits of Markham and Hurd as preceptors, between the Prince of Wales, who had been taught by them, and Dr. Parr. For Markham see *post*, Appendix 7, and for Hurd *post*, pp. 146, 178.]

[5] This was written on the information Mr. Gibbon had received, and the observation he had made, previous to his late residence at Lausanne. During his last visit to England, he had an opportunity of seeing at Sheffield Place

philosophical studies is proposed, and even pursued, in that numerous seminary: learning has been made a duty, a pleasure, and even a fashion; and several young gentlemen do honour to the college in which they have been educated.[1] According to the will of the donor, the profit of the second part of Lord Clarendon's History has been applied to the establishment of a riding-school, that the polite exercises might be taught, I know not with what success, in the university.[2] The Vinerian professorship is of far more serious importance; the laws of his country are the first science of an Englishman of rank and fortune, who is called to be a magistrate, and may hope to be a legislator. This judicious institution was coldly entertained by the graver doctors, who complained (I have heard the complaint) that it would take the young people from their books: but Mr. Viner's benefaction is not unprofitable, since it has at least produced the excellent commentaries of Sir William Blackstone.[3]

some young men of the college above alluded to; he had great satisfaction in conversing with them, made many inquiries respecting their course of study, applauded the discipline of Christ Church, and the liberal attention shown by the Dean, to those whose only recommendation was their merit. Had Mr. Gibbon lived to revise this work, I am sure he would have mentioned the name of Dr. Jackson with the highest commendation.—SHEFFIELD.

[William Markham was Dean, 1767-77; Lewis Bagot, 1777-83; and Cyril Jackson, 1783-1809. "Jackson assisted largely in framing the Public Examination Statute. He had a wonderful tact in managing that most unmanageable class of undergraduates, Noblemen. When he was walking in Tom Quadrangle every cap was off the head, even of Tutors and noblemen, while he was in sight" (Cox's *Recollections of Oxford*, p. 162).

"In the Hall I once read the following notice of the day on which the next term was to begin: *Juniores cujuscunque ordinis, die —, mens —, rebus divinis mane intersunto. Cyr. Jackson, Decanus.* The words *cujuscunque ordinis* are a memorial of the glory of Jackson. He made no disgraceful *tuft-hunting* distinctions in favour of noblemen or gentlemen commoners" (H. D. Best's *Memorials*, p. 101).]

[1] [Dr. Parr justly reproached Gibbon with not inquiring whether Magdalen had not improved. He adds that the Demyships were no longer given upon the recommendation of friends, but after a strict examination, and that "the exercises of the Demies during term were examined by a President [Routh] whose knowledge of the Greek philosophers, and Greek fathers, and of the Greek and Latin language was at least equal to that of Mr. Gibbon" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 555).]

[2] [In the vain attempt to establish this riding-school Dr. Johnson was interested. The profit derived from the publication was allowed to accumulate. By 1860 it amounted to £10,000. In 1872 it was spent in adding the Clarendon Laboratory to the University Museum (*Letters of Dr. Johnson*, i., 309, *n.*).]

[3] [See Appendix 18.]

After carrying me to Putney, to the house of his friend Mr. Mallet,[1] by whose philosophy I was rather scandalised than reclaimed, it was necessary for my father to form a new plan of education, and to devise some method which, if possible, might effect the cure of my spiritual malady. After much debate it was determined, from the advice and personal experience of Mr. Eliot (now Lord Eliot), to fix me, during some years, at Lausanne in Switzerland.[2] Mr. Frey, a Swiss gentleman of Basil,[3] undertook the conduct of the journey: we left London the 19th of June, crossed the sea from Dover to Calais, travelled post through several provinces of France, by the direct road of St. Quentin, Rheims, Langres, and Besançon, and arrived the 30th of June [1753] at Lausanne,

[1] The author of a *Life of Bacon*, which has been rated above its value; of some forgotten poems and plays; and of the pathetic ballad of *William and Margaret*. His tenets were deistical; perhaps a stronger term might have been used.—SHEFFIELD.

[Gibbon wrote on May 24, 1776: "His *William and Margaret*, his only good piece of poetry, is torn from him, and by the evidence of old manuscripts turns out to be the work of the celebrated Andrew Marvell, composed in the year 1670" (*Corres.*, i., 284). Gibbon refers to Edward Thompson's ed. of Marvell, 1776, 4to, 3 vols. (see *Gent. Mag.*, 1776, pp. 355, 559).

"Sundry attempts," writes Mr. Wheatley, "were made to rob Mallet of the credit of his song. Captain Thompson, the editor of Andrew Marvell's *Works*, claimed it for Marvell, but this claim was even more ridiculous than those he set up against Addison and Watts" (Percy's *Reliques*, ed. 1891, iii., 309).

Professor F. J. Child says that "a copy of the date 1711, with the title *William and Margaret, an Old Ballad*, turns out to be substantially the piece which Mallet published as his own in 1724, Mallet's changes being comparatively slight. *William and Margaret* is simply *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* rewritten in what used to be called an elegant style" (*Eng. and Scot. Popular Ballads*, iii., 199).

For Johnson's attack on Mallet as editor of Bolingbroke's *Works* see Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 268, and for his criticism of the *Life of Bacon* see Johnson's *Works*, viii., 465. See also *post*, p. 115.]

[2] [Three years later Eliot married Gibbon's first cousin (*ante*, p. 21). Eliot had travelled with Lord Chesterfield's son, under the care of the same tutor, Dr. Harte (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 333). They had spent some time at Lausanne (Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son*, i., 247).

Chesterfield writing about his godson, who succeeded him in the Earldom, said: "I would take him away from thence [Westminster School] before he is fourteen, and then transport him to Geneva, the soberest and most decent place that I know of in Europe" (Chesterfield's *Letters to A. C. Stanhope*, ed. 1890, p. 50).]

[3] [Gibbon recorded in 1763: "Frey est philosophe, et fort instruit, mais froid et nullement homme d'esprit. Il est las de courir le monde avec des jeunes fous" (*Misc. Works*, i., 169).]

where I was immediately settled under the roof and tuition of Mr. Pavilliard, a Calvinist minister.

The first marks of my father's displeasure rather astonished than afflicted me: when he threatened to banish, and disown, and disinherit a rebellious son, I cherished a secret hope that he would not be able or willing to effect his menaces; and the pride of conscience encouraged me to sustain the honourable and important part which I was now acting. My spirits were raised and kept alive by the rapid motion of my journey, the new and various scenes of the Continent, and the civility of Mr. Frey, a man of sense, who was not ignorant of books or the world. But after he had resigned me into Pavilliard's hands, and I was fixed in my new habitation, I had leisure to contemplate the strange and melancholy prospect before me. My first complaint arose from my ignorance of the language. In my childhood I had once studied the French grammar, and I could imperfectly understand the easy prose of a familiar subject. But when I was thus suddenly cast on a foreign land I found myself deprived of the use of speech and of hearing; and, during some weeks, incapable not only of enjoying the pleasures of conversation, but even of asking or answering a question in the common intercourse of life. To a home-bred Englishman every object, every custom was offensive; but the native of any country might have been disgusted with the general aspect of his lodging and entertainment. I had now exchanged my elegant apartment in Magdalen College for a narrow, gloomy street, the most unfrequented of an unhandsome town, for an old inconvenient house, and for a small chamber ill-contrived and ill-furnished, which, on the approach of winter, instead of a companionable fire, must be warmed by the dull invisible heat of a stove.[1]

[1] ["In 1753 Pavilliard was living in 17, Rue de la Cité derrière, now a police station. It has long vaulted corridors, and in the rear wide galleries, with pillars, commanding a view of the lake. The façade is somewhat changed" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 276, where a view is given of the gallery). In 1754 Pavilliard moved to "the parsonage (since pulled down) at the top of the Escalier des Grandes Roches, by the side of the old Hospital, now an Industrial School. It was at the bottom of a narrow court." From the southern

From a man I was again degraded to the dependence of a schoolboy. Mr. Pavilliard managed my expenses, which had been reduced to a diminutive state: I received a small monthly allowance for my pocket-money; and helpless and awkward as I have ever been, I no longer enjoyed the indispensable comfort of a servant.[1] My condition seemed as destitute of hope as it was devoid of pleasure: I was separated for an indefinite, which appeared an infinite term from my native country; and I had lost all connexion with my Catholic friends. I have since reflected with surprise, that as the Romish clergy of every part of Europe maintain a close correspondence with each other, they never attempted, by letters or messages, to rescue me from the hands of the heretics, or at least to confirm my zeal and constancy in the profession of the faith. Such was my first introduction to Lausanne; a place where I spent nearly five years with pleasure and profit, which I afterwards revisited without compulsion, and which I have finally selected as the most grateful retreat for the decline of my life.

But it is the peculiar felicity of youth that the most unpleasing objects and events seldom make a deep or lasting impression; it forgets the past, enjoys the present, and anticipates the future.[2] At the flexible age of sixteen I soon learned to endure, and gradually to adopt, the new forms of

windows there was "a full view of the city below, with the lake and the mountains of Savoy" (*ib.*, p. 274).

Gibbon mentions (*post*, p. 117) "the uncleanly avarice of Madame Pavilliard". "I was almost starved there with cold and hunger," he wrote thirty years later (*Misc. Works*, ii., 343; see also *Auto.*, pp. 131, 230).

Deyverdun recorded in his Diary in 1754: "M. Pavilliard, the most honest man in every way that I know; he is so honest that he injures his own affairs" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 303).]

[1] ["Mr. Gibbon," wrote Malone, "is so exceedingly indolent that he never even pares his nails. His servant, while Gibbon is reading, takes up one of his hands, and when he has performed the operation lays it down, and then manages the other—the patient in the meanwhile scarcely knowing what is going on, and quietly pursuing his studies" (Prior's *Malone*, p. 382).

Before he returned home he was allowed a servant. In a letter to Mlle. Curchod he speaks of "mon valet" (*Le Salon de Madame Necker*, par Le Vicomte d'Haussonville, 1882, i., 41).]

[2] [This paragraph is made of two; of which the latter runs: "The lively and flexible character of youth forgets," etc. (*Auto.*, pp. 133, 231).]

arbitrary manners: the real hardships of my situation were alienated by time. Had I been sent abroad in a more splendid style, such as the fortune and bounty of my father might have supplied, I might have returned home with the same stock of language and science as our countrymen usually import from the Continent.[1] An exile and a prisoner as I was, their example betrayed me into some irregularities of wine, of play, and of idle excursions[2]: but I soon felt the impossibility of associating with them on equal terms; and after the departure of my first acquaintance, I held a cold and civil correspondence with their successors. This seclusion from English society was attended with the most solid benefits. In the *Pays de Vaud*, the French language is used with less imperfection than in most of the distant provinces of France: in Pavilliard's family, necessity compelled me to listen and to speak; and if I was at first disheartened by the apparent slowness, in a few months I was astonished by the rapidity of my progress. My pronunciation was formed by the constant repetition of the same sounds; the variety of words and idioms, the rules of grammar, and distinctions of genders, were impressed in my memory: ease and freedom were obtained by practice; correctness and elegance by labour; and before I was recalled home, French, in which I spontaneously thought, was more familiar than English to my ear, my tongue, and my pen. The first effect of this opening knowledge was the revival of my love of reading, which had been chilled at Oxford; and I soon turned over, without much choice, almost all the French books in my tutor's library. Even these amusements were productive of real advantage: my taste and judgment were now somewhat riper. I was

[1] [*Post*, p. 166.]

[2] [Pavilliard wrote to Mrs. Gibbon on Jan. 28, 1755: "His behaviour has been very regular, and has made no slips, except that of gaming twice, and losing much more than I desired" (*Misc. Works*, i., 86). He was swindled of a hundred and ten guineas in two days' play by an Englishman named Gee, from whom he bought a horse, resolving to return to London in hopes of raising the money there. At Geneva Pavilliard overtook him, and brought him back to Lausanne (*Corres.*, i., 3).]

introduced to a new mode of style and literature: by the comparison of manners and opinions, my views were enlarged, my prejudices were corrected, and a copious voluntary abstract of the *Histoire de l'Eglise et de l'Empire*, by le Sueur,[1] may be placed in a middle line between my childish and my manly studies. As soon as I was able to converse with the natives, I began to feel some satisfaction in their company; my awkward timidity was polished and emboldened; and I frequented, for the first time, assemblies of men and women. The acquaintance of the Pavilliards prepared me by degrees for more elegant society. I was received with kindness and indulgence in the best families of Lausanne[2]; and it was in one of these that I formed an intimate and lasting connection with Mr. Deyverdun, a young man of an amiable temper and excellent understanding.[3] In the arts of fencing and dancing, small indeed was my proficiency; and some months were idly wasted in the riding-school.[4] My unfitness to bodily exercise reconciled me to a sedentary life, and the horse, the favourite

[1] ["*Histoire de l'Eglise et de l'Empire*, etc., par Jean le Sueur à Genève 1674. It was reprinted with a continuation by Benedict Pictet in 1730-32" (*The Decline*, ed. Milman, 1854, i., 44, *n.*).]

[2] [He wrote to his aunt in 1755: "I can say upon the whole, without vanity, that though I am the Englishman here who spends the least money, I am he who is the most generally liked" (*Corres.*, i., 8).]

[3] ["In the garrets of La Grotte" (Gibbon's Lausanne house), writes General Read, "I came upon the hitherto unknown portraits of Gibbon and Deyverdun, attached to each other by a ribbon in the form of a bow. In early life Gibbon had red hair. This tint appears through the powder in the picture. His hair preserved at Sheffield Place, cut off after death, is a deep chestnut, the hue that auburn hair often assumes in later life; it is also coarse, and displays here and there silver lines. A lock in the possession of M. de Sévery of Mex, cut off at an early period, confirms the portrait. In the picture the eyes are large and dark and grey, unlike the light orbs painted by Sir Joshua. There is a fine reddish colour in the lips and cheeks" (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 360). The two portraits are given as frontispieces to the two volumes. For an account of Deyverdun and his family see *ib.*, ii., 292.]

[4] [Eliot wrote from Lausanne in 1746: "The Dancing Master has six shillings a month, the Fencing Master has the same. The Riding Master has three guineas the first month and two afterwards" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 271). Gibbon was never, he says, "promoted to the use of stirrups or spurs" (*Auto.*, p. 236). He must have learnt to ride in the Militia. When merely a captain, he often "exercised the battalion in the absence of the two field officers". Later on he became Major and Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant (*post*, p. 168).]

of my countrymen, never contributed to the pleasures of my youth.[1]

My obligations to the lessons of Mr. Pavilliard, gratitude will not suffer me to forget: he was endowed with a clear head and a warm heart; his innate benevolence had assuaged the spirit of the church; he was rational, because he was moderate: in the course of his studies he had acquired a just though superficial knowledge of most branches of literature; by long practice, he was skilled in the arts of teaching; and he laboured with assiduous patience to know the character, gain the affection, and open the mind of his English pupil. As soon as we began to understand each other, he gently led me, from a blind and undistinguishing love of reading, into the path of instruction. I consented with pleasure that a portion of the morning hours should be consecrated to a plan of modern history and geography, and to the critical perusal of the French and Latin classics; and at each step I felt myself invigorated by the habits of application and method. His prudence repressed and dissembled some youthful sallies; and as soon as I was confirmed in the habits of industry and temperance, he gave the reins into my own hands. His favourable report of my behaviour and progress gradually obtained some latitude of action and expence; and he wished to alleviate the hardships of my lodging and entertainment. The principles of philosophy were associated with the examples of taste; and by a singular chance, the book, as well as the man, which contributed the most effectually to my education, has a stronger claim on my gratitude than on my admiration. Mr. De Crousaz, the adversary of Bayle and Pope,[2] is not distinguished by lively fancy or profound reflec-

[1] [His contempt for the chase he shows in *The Decline*, iii., 135. After describing Gratian's skill in exercises he continues: "These qualifications, which might be useful to a soldier, were prostituted to the viler purposes of hunting". In a later passage he writes: "The Caledonian hunt is a picture of savage life (Ovid, *Meta.*, viii.). Thirty or forty heroes were leagued against a hog; the brutes (not the hog) quarrelled with a lady for the head" (*ib.*, iv., 310).]

[2] [It was Pope's *Essay on Man* that Crousaz attacked. According to Warburton he had trusted Resnel's translation, who often did not understand the English. Thus Pope's lines (i., 277-78)—

tion; and even in his own country, at the end of a few years, his name and writings are almost obliterated. But his philosophy had been formed in the school of Locke, his divinity in that of Limborch[1] and Le Clerc; in a long and laborious life, several generations of pupils were taught to think, and even to write; his lessons rescued the academy of Lausanne from Calvinistic prejudice; and he had the rare merit of diffusing a more liberal spirit among the clergy and people of the Pays de Vaud. His system of logic, which in the last editions has swelled to six tedious and prolix volumes, may be praised as a clear and methodical abridgment of the art of reasoning, from our simple ideas to the most complex operations of the human understanding. This system I studied, and meditated, and abstracted, till I have obtained the free command of an universal instrument, which I soon presumed to exercise on my Catholic opinions. Pavilliard was not unmindful that his first task, his most important duty, was to reclaim me from the errors of popery. The intermixture of sects has rendered the Swiss clergy acute and learned on the topics of controversy; and I have some of his letters in which he celebrates the dexterity of his attack, and

"As full, as perfect in vile man that mourns
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns"

are translated:—

"Dans un homme ignoré, sous une humble chaumière,
Que dans le séraphin, rayonnant de lumière".

On this Crousaz remarked: "For all that, we sometimes find in persons of the lowest rank a fund of probity and resignation which preserves them from contempt" (Elwin's *Pope*, ii., 502). Voltaire describes him as "le philosophe le moins philosophe, et le bavard le plus bavard des Allemands" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xlvii., 551). He allowed, however, that in one part of his argument he convicted Pope of error (*ib.*, x., 125). Crousaz was not a German, but a native of Lausanne. See also Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 157; v. 80; and Johnson's *Works*, v., 202; viii., 287, 289.]

[1] [Gibbon recorded in 1762: "I resolved to substitute for my leisure hours the *Bibliothèque* of Le Clerc, as an inexhaustible source of amusement and instruction. . . . The second volume contains, pp. 20-51, *P. Limborchi Theologia Christiana*. Moderate and judicious, the general character of the Arminian divines" (*Misc. Works*, v., 224, 227).

Voltaire (*Œuvres*, xlii., 236), describing Limborch's controversy with a learned rabbi, says: "C'est peut-être la première dispute entre deux théologiens dans laquelle on ne se soit pas dit des injures".]

my gradual concessions after a firm and well-managed defence.[1] I was willing, and I am now willing, to allow him a handsome share of the honour of my conversion; yet I must observe, that it was principally effected by my private reflections[2]; and I still remember my solitary transport at the discovery of a philosophical argument against the doctrine of transubstantiation: *that* the text of scripture, which seems to inculcate the real presence, is attested only by a single sense—our sight; while the real presence itself is disproved by three of our senses—the sight, the touch, and the taste.[3] The various

[1] M. Pavilliard has described to me the astonishment with which he gazed on Mr. Gibbon standing before him: a thin little figure, with a large head, disputing and urging, with the greatest ability, all the best arguments that had ever been used in favour of popery. Mr. Gibbon many years ago became very fat and corpulent, but he had uncommonly small bones, and was very slight made.—SHEFFIELD.

[Pavilliard wrote to Gibbon's father on June 26, 1754: "Je croyais de semaine en semaine pouvoir vous annoncer que Monsieur votre fils avait entièrement renoncé aux fausses idées qu'il avait embrassées; mais il a fallu disputer le terrain pied à pied, et je n'ai pas trouvé en lui un homme léger, et qui passe rapidement d'un sentiment à un autre. . . . Je dois vous dire encore que, quoique j'ai trouvé M. votre fils très ferme dans ses idées, je l'ai trouvé raisonnable, qu'il s'est rendu à la lumière, et qu'il n'est pas, ce qu'on appelle, chicaneur" (*Misc. Works*, i., 82).

"Mme Bugnion, who died about 1830 at the age of ninety-one, related to her grandchildren that she attended the catechism taught by M. Pavilliard, and that Gibbon was present. The ordinary age of admission for such instruction was from fourteen to sixteen" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 276).]

[2] ["Chez Gibbon tout s'était passé dans la tête et dans le champ-clos de la dialectique; un raisonnement lui avait apporté son nouveau symbole, et un autre raisonnement le remporta. Il pouvait se dire, pour sa propre satisfaction, qu'il ne devait l'un et l'autre changement qu'à sa lecture ou à sa méditation solitaire. Plus tard, quand il se flattait d'être tout à fait impartial et indifférent sur les croyances, il est permis de supposer que, même sans se l'avouer, il nourrissait contre la pensée religieuse une secrète et froide rancune comme envers un adversaire qui vous a un jour atteint au défaut de la cuirasse, et qui vous a blessé" (*Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 438).]

[3] [Tillotson had anticipated him in this argument in his *Sermons preached upon Several Occasions*, ed. 1673, p. 316, where he says: "Supposing the *Scripture* to be a *Divine Revelation*, and that these words (*This is My Body*), if they be in Scripture, must necessarily be taken in the strict and literal sense, I ask now, What greater evidence any man has that these words (*This is My Body*) are in the Bible than every man has that the bread is not changed in the sacrament? Nay, no man has so much, for we have only the evidence of *one* sense that these words are in the Bible, but that the bread is not changed we have the concurring testimony of *several* of our senses." Hume speaks of it as "an argument against the *real presence*, which is as concise and elegant and strong as any argument can possibly be supposed against a doctrine so little worthy of a serious reputation" (Hume's *Essays*, ed. 1770, iii., 153). Johnson quotes it with approval (Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 71).]

articles of the Romish creed disappeared like a dream; and after a full conviction, on Christmas-day, 1754, I received the sacrament in the church of Lausanne. It was here that I suspended my religious inquiries, acquiescing with implicit belief in the tenets and mysteries, which are adopted by the general consent of Catholics and Protestants.[1]

Such, from my arrival at Lausanne, during the first eighteen or twenty months (July 1753—March 1755), were my useful studies, the foundation of all my future improvements. But every man who rises above the common level has received two educations: the first from his teachers; the second, more personal and important, from himself. He will not, like the fanatics of the last age, define the moment of grace; but he cannot forget the era of his life, in which his mind has expanded to its proper form and dimensions. My worthy tutor had the good sense and modesty to discern how far he could be useful: as soon as he felt that I advanced beyond his speed and measure, he wisely left me to my genius; and the hours of lesson were soon lost in the voluntary labour of the whole morning, and sometimes of the whole day. The desire of prolonging my time, gradually confirmed the salutary habit of early rising, to which I have always adhered, with some regard to seasons and situations; but it is happy for my eyes and my health, that my temperate ardour has never been seduced to trespass on the hours of the night. During the last three years of my residence at Lausanne, I may assume the merit of serious and solid application; but I am tempted to distinguish the last eight months of the year 1755, as the period of the most extraordinary diligence and rapid progress. In my French and Latin translations I adopted an excellent method, which, from my own success, I would recommend to the imitation of students. I chose some classic writer, such as Cicero and Vertot,[2] the most approved for purity and

[1] [See Appendix 19.]

[2] [It was probably Vertot's *Révolutions de la République Romaine* that Gibbon thus treated. See *Misc. Works*, v., 509, for a criticism of this book, and *ib.*, p. 389, where he describes Vertot as "an author whose works are read with the same pleasure as romances, to which in other respects they bear too

elegance of style. I translated, for instance, an epistle of Cicero into French; and after throwing it aside, till the words and phrases were obliterated from my memory, I re-translated my French into such Latin as I could find; and then compared each sentence of my imperfect version, with the ease, the grace, the propriety of the Roman orator. A similar experiment was made on several pages of the Revolutions of Vertot; I turned them into Latin, returned them after a sufficient interval into my own French, and again scrutinized the resemblance or dissimilitude of the copy and the original. By degrees I was less ashamed, by degrees I was more satisfied with myself; and I persevered in the practice of these double translations, which filled several books, till I had acquired the knowledge of both idioms, and the command at least of a correct style.[1] This useful exercise of writing was accompanied and succeeded by the more pleasing occupation of reading the best authors. The perusal of the Roman classics was at once my exercise and reward. Dr. Middleton's History, which I then appreciated above its true value, naturally directed me to the writings of Cicero.[2] The most perfect editions, that of Olivet,[3] which may adorn the shelves of the

much resemblance". In *The Decline*, vii., 27, he points out that "Vertot betrays his ignorance in supposing that Othman, a freebooter of the Bithynian hills, could besiege Rhodes by sea and land".]

[1] ["Il (Gibbon) se rompit à écrire correctement tant en français qu'en latin, et en acquérant une égale facilité à s'exprimer en diverses langues, il perdit moins une originalité d'expression pour laquelle il semblait peu fait, qu'il n'acquit l'élégance, la lumière et la clarté qui deviendront ses mérites habituels" (*Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 442). In clearness Gibbon sometimes fails, not perhaps in his Autobiography, but in his History. His unwillingness to repeat a name, and his aim at effect too often make his meaning doubtful at the first reading.]

[2] [Horace Walpole wrote from Florence on March 25, 1741: "I wait with some patience to see Dr. Middleton's *Tully*, as I read the greatest part of it in manuscript; though indeed that is rather a reason for my being impatient to read the rest. If Tully can receive any additional honour, Dr. Middleton is most capable of giving it" (Walpole's *Letters*, i., 67. *Ante*, p. 67).]

[3] [Voltaire, mentioning him in his *Siècle de Louis XIV*, says: "Son âge et son mérite sont notre excuse de l'avoir placé, ainsi que le président Hénault, dans une liste où nous nous étions fait une loi de ne parler que des morts" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 80). D'Alembert wrote of him to Voltaire: "C'était un passable académicien, mais un bien mauvais confrère, qui haïssait tout le monde, et qui, entre nous, ne vous aimait pas plus qu'un autre" (*ib.*, lxii., 467).]

rich, that of Ernesti,[1] which should lie on the table of the learned, were not in my power.[2] For the familiar epistles I used the text and English commentary of Bishop Ross[3]; but my general edition was that of Verburgius, published at Amsterdam in two large volumes in folio, with an indifferent choice of various notes. I read, with application and pleasure, *all* the epistles, *all* the orations, and the most important treatises of rhetoric and philosophy; and as I read, I applauded the observation of Quintilian, that every student may judge of his own proficiency, by the satisfaction which he receives from the Roman orator.[4] I tasted the beauties of language, I breathed the spirit of freedom, and I imbibed from his precepts and examples the public and private sense of a man. Cicero in Latin, and Xenophon[5] in Greek, are indeed the two ancients whom I would first propose to a liberal scholar; not only for the merit of their style and sentiments, but for the admirable lessons, which may be applied almost to every situation of public and private life. Cicero's epistles may in particular afford the models of every form of correspondence, from the careless effusions of tenderness and friendship, to the well-guarded declaration of discreet and dignified resentment. After finishing this great author, a library of eloquence and reason, I formed a more extensive plan of reviewing the Latin classics,[6] under the four divisions of, 1. historians, 2.

[1] [Published in 1737-39.]

[2] [In the second edition Lord Sheffield changed this into "were not within my reach" (*Misc. Works*, i., 89).]

[3] [John Ross published Cicero's *Epistolæ ad Familiares* in 1749. He was made Bishop of Exeter in 1778.]

[4] ["Quare non immerito ab hominibus ætatis suæ regnare in judiciis dictus est, apud posteros vero id consecutus, ut Cicero jam non hominis nomen sed eloquentiæ habeatur. Hunc igitur spectemus, hoc propositum nobis sit exemplum, ille se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero valde placebit" (*Inst. Orator.*, x., i., 112).]

[5] [*Post*, p. 184.]

[6] Journal, January 1756. I determined to read over the Latin authors in order; and read this year, Virgil, Sallust, Livy, Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Quintus Curtius, Justin, Florus, Plautus, Terence, and Lucretius. I also read and meditated Locke upon the Understanding.—GIBBON. [It was on January 19, 1756, that he formed this determination (*Misc. Works*, iii., Preface, p. 4). The record of the year's work must have been made in January, 1757.]

poets, 3. orators, and 4. philosophers, in a chronological series, from the days of Plautus and Sallust, to the decline of the language and empire of Rome: and this plan, in the last twenty-seven months of my residence at Lausanne (January 1756—April 1758), I *nearly* accomplished. Nor was this review, however rapid, either hasty or superficial. I indulged myself in a second and even a third perusal of Terence, Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, etc., and studied to imbibe the sense and spirit most congenial to my own. I never suffered a difficult or corrupt passage to escape, till I had viewed it in every light of which it was susceptible: though often disappointed, I always consulted the most learned or ingenious commentators, Torrentius and Dacier on Horace, Catrou [1] and Servius on Virgil, Lipsius on Tacitus, Meziriac on Ovid,[2] etc.; and in the ardour of my inquiries, I embraced a large circle of historical and critical erudition. My abstracts of each book were made in the French language: my observations often branched into particular essays; and I can still read, without contempt,[3] a dissertation of eight folio pages on eight lines (287-294) of the fourth Georgic of Virgil. Mr. Deyverdun, my friend, whose name will be frequently repeated, had joined with equal zeal, though not with equal perseverance, in the same undertaking. To him every thought, every composition was instantly communicated; with him I enjoyed the benefits of a free conversation on the topics of our common studies.[4]

[1] ["Catrou (*François*), né en 1659, jésuite. Il a fait avec le père Rouillé vingt tomes de l'*Histoire romaine*. Ils ont cherché l'éloquence, et n'ont pas trouvé la précision" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 62).]

[2] [Gibbon, in the record of his studies in 1762, says: "I consulted Meziriac's *Ovid*, in relation to the omens from the flight of birds. From the materials which he laid before me I conceived a much clearer notion of the subject than he had himself" (*Misc. Works*, v., 219).]

[3] [In one of his Memoirs he uses these words very condescendingly. Speaking of the *Arabian Nights* he says: "In my present maturity I can revolve without contempt that pleasing medley of Oriental manners and supernatural fictions" (*Auto.*, p. 118). Perhaps Gibbon remembered that Chesterfield, among "the frivolous and idle books" which his son should avoid, had mentioned "the Oriental ravings and extravagancies of the *Arabian Nights*" (*Letters to his Son*, ii., 335).

For the dissertation on Virgil see *Misc. Works*, iv., 446.]

[4] [General Read, who found Gibbon's "diploma as a Master Mason", describes him and Deyverdun as "earnest Masons". Gibbon became a Free-

But it is scarcely possible for a mind endowed with any active curiosity to be long conversant with the Latin classics, without aspiring to know the Greek originals, whom they celebrate as their masters, and of whom they so warmly recommend the study and imitation;

———Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.[1]

It was now that I regretted the early years which had been wasted in sickness or idleness, or more[2] idle reading; that I condemned the perverse method of our schoolmasters, who, by first teaching the mother-language, might descend with so much ease and perspicuity to the origin and etymology of a derivative idiom.[3] In the nineteenth year of my age I determined to supply this defect; and the lessons of Pavilliard again contributed to smooth the entrance of the way, the Greek alphabet, the grammar, and the pronunciation according to the French accent. At my earnest request we presumed to open the Iliad; and I had the pleasure of beholding, though darkly and through a glass,[4] the true image of Homer, whom I had long since admired in an English dress. After my tutor had left me to myself, I worked my way through about half the Iliad, and afterwards interpreted alone a large portion of Xenophon and Herodotus.

mason at this time, induced no doubt by his friend and his friend's uncle (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 297, 367). That he was "earnest" there is nothing to show, and is inconsistent with his character, unless with the character of his early youth. He never mentions the Society in his writings, so far as I know.]

[1] [Make the Greek authors your supreme delight,
Read them by day, and study them by night.
(Francis' *Horace*, *De Arte Poetica*, l. 268.)]

[2] [In Lord Sheffield's editions, mere.]

[3] ["The Greek seems to be, in a great measure, a simple, uncompounded language, formed from the primitive jargon of those wandering savages, the ancient Hellenians and Pelasgians. . . . The Latin is a composition of the Greek and of the ancient Tuscan languages" (Adam Smith, *Formation of Languages. Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. 1801, ii., 383).
While Gibbon was writing his *Autobiography*, Sir William Jones was teaching in India "that no philologer could examine Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists" (*Life of Jones*, ed. 1815, p. 468).]

[4] ["For now we see through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor. xiii. 12).]

But my ardour, destitute of aid and emulation, was gradually cooled, and, from the barren task of searching words in a lexicon, I withdrew to the free and familiar conversation of Virgil and Tacitus. Yet in my residence at Lausanne I had laid a solid foundation, which enabled me, in a more propitious season, to prosecute the study of Grecian literature.

From a blind idea of the usefulness of such abstract science, my father had been desirous, and even pressing, that I should devote some time to the mathematics; nor could I refuse to comply with so reasonable a wish. During two winters I attended the private lectures of Monsieur de Traytorrens, who explained the elements of algebra and geometry, as far as the conic sections of the Marquis de l'Hôpital,[1] and appeared satisfied with my diligence and improvement. But as my childish propensity for numbers and calculations was totally extinct,[2] I was content to receive the passive impression of my professor's lectures without any active exercise of my own powers. As soon as I understood the principles, I relinquished for ever the pursuit of the mathematics;[3] nor can I lament that I desisted, before my mind was hardened by the habit of rigid demonstration, so destructive of the finer feelings of moral evidence, which must, however, determine the actions and opinions of our lives.[4] I listened with more pleasure to the proposal of studying the law of nature and nations, which was taught in the academy of Lausanne by Mr. Vicat, a professor of some learning and reputation. But instead of attending his public or private course, I preferred in my closet the lessons of his masters, and my own reason. Without being disgusted

[1] ["L'Hospital (*François*, marquis de), né en 1661, le premier qui ait écrit en France sur le calcul inventé par Newton, qu'il appela *les infiniment petits*; c'était alors un prodige. Mort en 1704" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 120).]

[2] [*Ante*, p. 31.]

[3] [In 1762 he thought of taking up the pursuit again, and consulted "a very able mathematician" about the best course of study (*Misc. Works*, ii., 44).]

[4] [J. S. Mill, writing of the school logic, continues: "The boasted influence of mathematical studies is nothing to it; for in mathematical processes none of the real difficulties of correct ratiocination occur" (Mill's *Auto.*, ed. 1873, p. 19).]

by Grotius or Puffendorf, I studied in their writings the duties of a man, the rights of a citizen, the theory of justice (it is, alas! a theory), and the laws of peace and war, which have had some influence on the practice of modern Europe. My fatigues were alleviated by the good sense of their commentator Barbeyrac.[1] Locke's Treatise of Government instructed me in the knowledge of Whig principles, which are rather founded in reason than experience,[2] but my delight was in the frequent perusal of Montesquieu, whose energy of style, and boldness of hypothesis, were powerful to awaken and stimulate the genius of the age. The logic of De Crousaz had prepared me to engage with his master Locke and his antagonist Bayle[3]; of whom the former may be used as a bridle, and the latter applied as a spur, to the curiosity of a young philosopher. According to the nature of their respective works, the schools of argument and objection, I carefully went through the Essay on Human Understanding, and occasionally consulted the most interesting articles of the Philosophic Dictionary. In the infancy of my reason I turned over, as an idle amusement, the most serious and important treatise: in its maturity, the most trifling performance could exercise my taste or judgment, and more than once I have been led by a novel[4] into a deep and

[1] [Gibbon said of reading: "This nourishment is easily converted into poison. Salmasius had read as much as Grotius, perhaps more. But their different modes of reading made the one an enlightened philosopher, and the other, to speak plainly, a pedant puffed up with an useless erudition" (*Misc. Works*, v., 209).

"Ce n'est point assurément l'ouvrage immense de Grotius, sur le droit prétendu de la guerre et de la paix, qui a rendu les hommes moins féroces; ce ne sont pas ses citations de Carnéade, de Quintilien . . . ; ce n'est point parce qu'après le déluge il fut défendu de manger les animaux avec leur âme et leur sang, comme le rapporte Barbeyrac son commentateur. Ce n'est point, en un mot, par tous les argumens profondément frivoles de Grotius et de Puffendorf," etc. (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xii., 235).]

[2] [No experience could teach Gibbon. "With many a sincere and silent vote", session after session, he had supported the Tory ministry in the war with our colonies, and had done what he could to bring England to the brink of ruin (*post*, p. 191).]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 76.]

[4] [Miss Burney recorded of her novel *Cecilia*, on the authority of Reynolds, that "Gibbon said he read the whole five volumes in a day" (Mme. D'Arblay's *Diary*, ii., 196).]

instructive train of thinking. But I cannot forbear to mention three particular books, since they may have remotely contributed to form the historian of the Roman empire. 1. From the Provincial Letters of Pascal, which almost every year I have perused with new pleasure, I learned to manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony, even on subjects of ecclesiastical solemnity.[1] 2. The Life of Julian, by the Abbé de la Bleterie,[2] first introduced me to the man and the times; and I should be glad to recover my first essay on the truth of the miracle which stopped the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem.[3] 3. In Giannone's Civil History of Naples I observed with a critical eye the progress and abuse of sacerdotal power, and the revolutions of Italy in the darker ages.[4] This various reading, which I now con-

[1] [In one of his Memoirs he associates Giannone with Pascal as his teacher of irony (*Auto.*, p. 235).]

[2] [Gibbon recorded in his journal in 1764: "*The History of Jovian, and the Translation of some Works of Julian*, by the Abbé de la Bleterie: admirable in point of erudition, taste, elegance, and I will add, moderation. Julian was a Pagan, but the Abbé hates only the Jesuits" (*Misc. Works*, v., 463). Though in *The Decline* Gibbon often praises him, yet in one passage (ii., 469) he speaks of his "superstitious complacency," and in another (*ib.*, p. 526) he blames the "political metaphysics" by which "he pronounced that Jovian was not bound to execute his promise". Voltaire writes of him and his *Vie de Julien*: "Il n'appartient point à un prêtre d'écrire l'histoire; il faut être désintéressé sur tout, et un prêtre ne l'est sur rien" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xlvi., 429). Aiming at his style Voltaire says: "On est parvenu jusqu'à rendre Tacite ridicule" (*ib.*, xix., 392). See *post*, p. 306.]

[3] [Gibbon, after describing the miracle, adds in a note: "Dr. Lardner, perhaps alone of the Christian critics, presumes to doubt the truth of this famous miracle. The silence of Jerome would lead to a suspicion that the same story, which was celebrated at a distance, might be despised on the spot" (*The Decline*, ii., 460).]

[4] ["The subject of ecclesiastical jurisdiction has been involved in a mist of passion, of prejudice, and of interest. Two of the fairest books which have fallen into my hands are the *Institutes of Canon Law*, by the Abbé de Fleury, and the *Civil History of Naples*, by Giannone. Their moderation was the effect of situation as well as of temper. Fleury was a French ecclesiastic, who respected the authority of the parliaments; Giannone was an Italian lawyer, who dreaded the power of the Church" (*The Decline*, ii., 322).

"Giannone est le seul qui ait jeté quelque jour sur l'origine de la domination suprême affectée par les papes sur le royaume de Naples. Il a rendu en cela un service éternel aux rois de ce pays; et pour récompense, il a été abandonné par l'empereur Charles VI, alors roi de Naples, à la persécution des jésuites; trahi depuis par la plus lâche des perfidies, sacrifié à la cour de Rome, il a fini sa vie dans la captivité" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xxvi., 80).

Johnson quotes Giannone's saying to a monk, "who wanted what he called to *convert* him: 'Tu sei santo, ma tu non sei filosofo'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 3).]

ducted with discretion, was digested, according to the precept and model of Mr. Locke, into a large common-place book [1]; a practice, however, which I do not strenuously recommend. The action of the pen will doubtless imprint an idea on the mind as well as on the paper: but I much question whether the benefits of this laborious method are adequate to the waste of time; and I must agree with Dr. Johnson, (Idler, No. 74) "that what is twice read, is commonly better remembered, than what is transcribed".[2]

During two years, if I forget some boyish excursions of a day or a week, I was fixed at Lausanne; but at the end of the third summer, my father consented that I should make the tour of Switzerland with Pavilliard: and our short absence of one month (September 21st—October 20th, 1755) was a reward and relaxation of my assiduous studies. The fashion of climbing the mountains and viewing [3] the *Glaciers*, had not yet been introduced by foreign travellers, who seek the sublime beauties of nature.[4] But the political face of the country is not less diversified by the forms and spirit of so many various republics, from the jealous government of the *few* [5] to the licentious freedom of the *many*. I contemplated with pleasure the new prospects of men and manners; though my conversation with the natives would have been more free

[1] [*A New Method of making Common-Place Books, written by the late Learned Mr. John Lock* [*sic*]. Translated from the French. London: 1706. According to the Preface, Locke drew it up when abroad, "and gave it to Le Clerc, who published it in French in the second tome of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*".]

[2] [Johnson goes on to say: "The true art of memory is the art of attention". He himself "had written, in the form of Mr. Locke's *Common-Place Book*, a variety of hints for essays on different subjects" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 204).]

[3] [In Lord Sheffield's editions, reviewing.]

[4] [In the Index to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, from 1731 to 1786, I cannot find a single entry referring to the glaciers or mountains of Switzerland, or to mountain climbing. It was in 1786 that Mont Blanc was first ascended. In 1784 Gibbon wrote: "During the summer Lausanne is possibly, after Spa, one of the most favourite places of general resort. The voyage of Switzerland, the Alps, and the Glaciers is become a fashion" (*Corres.*, ii., 116; see also *post*, p. 221).]

[5] [Vaud at this time was governed by Berne, and Berne was governed by an aristocracy (*post*, p. 238). Gibbon, in a letter "probably written about the time of his first leaving Lausanne," attacked Berne's government of Vaud (*Misc. Works*, ii., 1).]

and instructive, had I possessed the German, as well as the French language. We passed through most of the principal towns of Switzerland; Neufchâtel, Bienne, Soleurre, Arau, Baden, Zurich, Basil, and Berne. In every place we visited the churches, arsenals, libraries, and all the most eminent persons; and after my return, I digested my notes in fourteen or fifteen sheets of a French journal, which I despatched to my father, as a proof that my time and his money had not been mis-spent. Had I found this journal among his papers, I might be tempted to select some passages [1]; but I will not transcribe the printed accounts, and it may be sufficient to notice a remarkable spot, which left a deep and lasting impression on my memory. From Zurich we proceeded to the Benedictine Abbey of Einsidlen, more commonly styled Our Lady of the Hermits. I was astonished by the profuse ostentation of riches in the poorest corner of Europe; amidst a savage scene of woods and mountains, a palace appears to have been erected by magic; and it was erected by the potent magic of religion.[2] A crowd of palmers and votaries was prostrate before the altar. The title and worship of the Mother of God provoked my indignation [3]; and the lively naked image of superstition suggested to me, as in the same place it had done to Zuinglius, the most pressing argument for the reformation of the Church.[4] About two years after

[1] [General Read has printed "the greater portion of it". He found it in the garret of La Grotte (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 314, 367).]

[2] [Gibbon had said the same in his "Introduction à l'Histoire Générale de la République des Suisses" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 273): "Le contraste de ses bâtiments magnifiques avec le pays affreux qui les entoure fait naître l'idée des palais enchantés, qui paraissaient tout à coup au milieu des déserts. La magie d'Einsidlen est celle de la superstition, qui lui attire encore de toutes les provinces voisines une foule de pélerins et d'offrandes." See also *ib.*, p. 508.

According to Baedecker (*Switzerland*, ed. 1893, p. 98), "the pilgrims number about 150,000 annually". The Abbey is in Schwyz.]

[3] [Gibbon, writing of the years A.D. 429-431, says: "The Blessed Virgin Nestorius revered as the mother of Christ, but his ears were offended with the rash and recent title of Mother of God" (*The Decline*, v., 111).]

[4] [Zuinglius was the parish priest of Einsidlen. So early as 1516 he taught his congregation to seek salvation, not in the Holy Virgin, but in the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ (*Histoire de la Réformation de la Suisse*, par Abraham Ruchat, 1727, i., 9, 41, 292).

Chesterfield wrote to his son, who had visited this place eight years before

this tour, I passed at Geneva a useful and agreeable month; but this excursion, and short visits in the Pays de Vaud, did not materially interrupt my studious and sedentary life at Lausanne.

My thirst of improvement, and the languid state of science at Lausanne,[1] soon prompted me to solicit a literary correspondence with several men of learning, whom I had not an opportunity of personally consulting. 1. In the perusal of Livy (xxx., 44), I had been stopped by a sentence in a speech of Hannibal, which cannot be reconciled by any torture with his character or argument. The commentators dissemble, or confess their perplexity. It occurred to me, that the change of a single letter, by substituting *otio* instead of *odio*, might restore a clear and consistent sense; but I wished to weigh my emendation in scales less partial than my own. I addressed myself to M. Crevier, the successor of Rollin, and a professor in the university of Paris, who had published a large and valuable edition of Livy. His answer was speedy and polite; he praised my ingenuity, and adopted my conjecture.[2] 2. I maintained a Latin correspondence, at first anonymous, and afterwards in my own name, with Professor Breitinger of Zurich, the learned editor of a Septuagint Bible. In our frequent letters we discussed many questions of antiquity,

Gibbon: "I do not wonder that you were surprised at the credulity and superstition of the Papists at Einsiedlen, and at their absurd stories of their chapel. But remember, at the same time, that errors and mistakes, however gross, in matters of opinion, if they are sincere, are to be pitied, but not punished, nor laughed at" (*Letters to his Son*, i., 272).]

[1] [Gibbon, writing of the government of Berne, said: "Indiquez moi quelque établissement vraiment utile que vous deviez au souverain. Mais ne m'indiquez pas l'académie de Lausanne, fondée par des vues de dévotion, dans la chaleur d'une réformation, négligée depuis, et toujours académie" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 17). For "la bibliothèque publique . . . assez piteuse" de Lausanne see *post*, p. 223, *n.*]

[2] [The line as it stood was: "Nec esse in vos odio vestro consultum ab Romanis credatis". Crevier, in his reply, accepting Gibbon's correction, added to it by changing *in vos* into *in his*. "Alors la phrase sera complètement bonne. *Nec esse in his otio vestro consultum ab Romanis credatis*. 'Ne pensez pas que dans ces mesures que prennent les Romains, pour vous ôter toutes vos forces, et en vous interdisant la guerre avec l'étranger, ils aient eu pour objet votre tranquillité et votre repos'" (*Misc. Works*, i., 435). In my copy of Crevier's *Livy*, Oxford, 1825, the old reading remains.]

many passages of the Latin classics.[1] I proposed my interpretations and amendments. His censures, for he did not spare my boldness of conjecture, were sharp and strong; and I was encouraged by the consciousness of my strength, when I could stand in free debate against a critic of such eminence and erudition. 3. I corresponded on similar topics with the celebrated Professor Matthew Gesner, of the University of Gottingen; and he accepted, as courteously as the two former, the invitation of an unknown youth. But his abilities might possibly be decayed; his elaborate letters were feeble and prolix; and when I asked his proper direction, the vain old man covered half a sheet of paper with the foolish enumeration of his titles and offices.[2] 4. These Professors of Paris, Zurich, and Gottingen, were strangers, whom I presumed to address on the credit of their name; but Mr. Allamand, minister at Bex, was my personal friend, with whom I maintained a more free and interesting correspondence. He was a master of language, of science, and, above all, of dispute; and his acute and flexible logic could support, with equal address, and perhaps with equal indifference, the adverse sides of every possible question. His spirit was active, but his pen had been indolent. Mr. Allamand had exposed himself to much scandal and reproach, by an anonymous letter (1745) to the Protestants of France,[3] in which he labours to persuade them that *public* worship is the exclusive right and duty of the state, and that their numerous assemblies of dissenters and rebels were not authorised by the law or the gospel. His

[1] [Two of Breitinger's letters, written in Latin, are given in Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, i., 456, 477. In the second, he addresses his correspondent, who was two months short of twenty, as "Præclarissime ac Nobilissime Vir".]

[2] ["A Monsieur, Monsieur Gesner, Conseiller de la Cour de sa Majesté Britannique, Professeur Ordinaire de l'Université de Gottingue, Inspecteur Général des Ecoles de l'Electorat de Hanovre, Bibliothécaire de l'Université, Directeur du Séminaire Philologique, Président de la Société Royale de l'Eloquence Allemande, et Membre de la Société Royale de Sciences de Gottingue, etc." He gave, however, as an alternative, an address of only two lines (*ib.*, i., 514).]

[3] [*Lettre sur les assemblées des religionnaires en Languedoc, écrite à un gentilhomme protestant de cette province, par M.-D.-L. F.-D.-M.*, imprimée en France sous la fausse indication de Rotterdam, 1745 (*Nouv. Biog. Gén.*).]

style is animated, his arguments specious; and if the papist may seem to lurk under the mask of a protestant, the philosopher is concealed under the disguise of a papist. After some trials in France and Holland, which were defeated by his fortune or his character, a genius that might have enlightened or deluded the world, was buried in a country living, unknown to fame, and discontented with mankind.[1] *Est sacrificulus in pago, et rusticos decipit.* As often as private or ecclesiastical business called him to Lausanne, I enjoyed the pleasure and benefit of his conversation, and we were mutually flattered by our attention to each other. Our correspondence, in his absence, chiefly turned on Locke's metaphysics, which he attacked, and I defended; the origin of ideas, the principles of evidence, and the doctrine of liberty[2];

> And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.[3]

By fencing with so skilful a master, I acquired some dexterity in the use of my philosophic weapons; but I was still the slave of education and prejudice, he had some measures to keep; and I much suspect that he never showed me the true colours of his secret scepticism.

Before I was recalled from Switzerland, I had the satisfaction of seeing the most extraordinary man of the age; a poet, an historian, a philosopher, who has filled thirty quartos of prose and verse with his various productions, often excellent,

[1] ["He was in 1773 appointed to the Chair of Greek and Ethics in the Academy of Lausanne. He was Rector of the Academy from 1775 to 1778, and died April 3, 1784" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 135). See *ib.*, p. 141, for his letter to Voltaire from Bex, where he says: "By dint of shining for others I myself am become extinguished".]

[2] [Two of Allamand's letters are printed in Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, i., 436-455. He ends the second with saying: "Il y a longtemps que je soupçonne un plan formé de réduire le système général à trois grands empires; celui des Français à l'occident du Rhin, celui d'Autriche à l'orient, et celui des Russes au nord. Il n'y en a pourtant rien dans l'Apocalypse. Qu'on partage la terre comme on voudra, pourvu qu'il y soit permis de croire, que ce qui est, est; et que les contradictoires ne peuvent pas être vraies en même temps."

Milman (*The Decline*, ed. 1854, i., 53) quotes Dugald Stewart as saying (*Preface to Encyclop.*, ii., 13) that "these letters may be still read with advantage by many logicians of no small note in the learned world".]

[3] [*Paradise Lost*, ii., 561.]

and always entertaining. Need I add the name of Voltaire? After forfeiting, by his own misconduct, the friendship of the first of kings,[1] he retired, at the age of sixty, with a plentiful fortune, to a free and beautiful country, and resided two winters (1757 and 1758) in the town or neighbourhood of Lausanne.[2] My desire of beholding Voltaire, whom I then rated above his real magnitude,[3] was easily gratified. He received me with civility as an English youth; but I cannot

[1] [In 1752 Voltaire wrote a satire on Maupertuis, President of the Academy of Berlin, under the title of *Diatribe du Docteur Akakia*. It is said that he read it to Frederick the Great, but promised that it should not be published. According to his own account it was printed without his consent in Holland, whence it rapidly spread—"30,000 copies sold in Paris". The King did not believe him, and wrote him the following letter:—

"Votre Efrontrie m'etone, apres ce que vous venéz de faire et qui est Clair Come le jour vous persistéz au lieu de vous avouér coupable, ne vous imaginéz pas que vous feréz Croire que le Noir est blang, quand on ne Voit pas, c'est qu'on ne Veut pas tout Voir, mais si vous poussez L'affaire a bout je ferai tout imprimér, et Lon vera que si Vos ouvrages Meritent qu'on Vous Erige des Statues votre Conduite vous meriterait des Chaines.

"L'editeur est Interogé il a tout Declaré."

Voltaire replied:—

"Ah mon dieu Sire dans letat ou je suis! je vous jure encor sur ma vie a la quelle je renonce sans peine que cest une calomnie affreuse. je vous conjure de faire confronter tous mes gens. quoi vous me jugeriez sans entendre. je demande justice, et la mort." From a facsimile of the original of the King's letter and of Voltaire's answer written beneath on the same sheet (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xli., 12).

Mr. Carlyle in his *Friedrich II.* (ed. in ten vols. n.d.), vi., 274, reverses the order of the letters, making the King's the answer to Voltaire's. The last sentence he translates: "I demand justice or death". He refers to *Œuvres de Frédéric*, xxii., 302, i.]

[2] [Voltaire wrote in 1754: "Ce Lausanne est devenu un singulier pays. Il est peuplé d'Anglais et de Français philosophes, qui sont venus y chercher de la tranquillité et du soleil. On y parle français, on y pense à l'anglaise. On me presse tous les jours d'y aller faire un tour" (*Œuvres*, xlix., 109).]

[3] ["Aug. 28, 1762. I finished the *Siècle de Louis XIV*. I believe that Voltaire had for this work an advantage which he has seldom enjoyed. When he treats of a distant period, he is not a man to turn over musty monkish writers to instruct himself. He follows some compilation, varnishes it over with the magic of his style, and produces a most agreeable, superficial, inaccurate performance. But there the information, both written and oral, lay within his reach, and he seems to have taken great pains to consult it" (*Misc. Works*, v., 247).

"He casts a keen and lively glance over the surface of history" (*The Decline*, v., 419). "In his way Voltaire was a bigot, an intolerable bigot" (*ib.*, vii., 139). "The pious zeal of Voltaire is excessive, and even ridiculous" (*ib.*, vii., 188). Gibbon had perhaps been slighted by Voltaire. In his *Auto.*, p. 149, he speaks of him as "the envious bard" and attacks the acting of "his fat and ugly niece".]

boast of any peculiar notice or distinction, *Virgilium vidi tantum.*[1]

The ode which he composed on his first arrival on the banks of the Leman Lake, *O Maison d'Aristippe! O Jardin d'Epicure,*[2] *etc.* had been imparted as a secret to the gentleman by whom I was introduced. He allowed me to read it twice; I knew it by heart[3]; and as my discretion was not equal to my memory, the author was soon displeased by the circulation of a copy. In writing this trivial anecdote, I wished to observe whether my memory was impaired, and I have the comfort of finding that every line of the poem is still engraved in fresh and indelible characters. The highest gratification which I derived from Voltaire's residence at Lausanne, was the uncommon circumstance of hearing a great poet declaim his own productions on the stage. He had formed a company of gentlemen and ladies, some of whom were not destitute of talents. A decent theatre was framed at Monrepos, a country-house at the end of a suburb[4]; dresses and scenes were provided at the expense of the actors; and the author directed the rehearsals with the zeal and attention of paternal love. In two successive winters his tragedies of Zayre, Alzire, Zulime, and his sentimental comedy of the Enfant Prodigue, were played at the theatre of Monrepos. Voltaire represented the characters best adapted to his years, Lusignan, Alvaréz, Benassar, Euphe-

[1] [Ovid, *Tristia*, iv., 10, 51.
Though Voltaire outlived the publication of the first part of *The Decline and Fall* by more than two years, Gibbon's name is nowhere mentioned by him—at all events it does not appear in the index of his Works.]

[2] [*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xi., 174.]

[3] [It contains 122 lines. Dr. Johnson learnt by heart at two readings Hawkesworth's *Ode on Life*, but it contained only sixty-eight lines—lines moreover of fewer feet than Voltaire's ode (*John. Misc.*, ii., 167).]

[4] [To form the stage "a communication was opened through the house wall and an adjoining hay-loft; the spectators were within the château. During a representation of Zaïre, when Lusignan said to Chatillon [Act ii., scene 3]:—

En quels lieux sommes-nous? aidez mes faibles yeux!

a caustic Lausannois cried out:—

Seigneur, c'est le grenier du maître de ces lieux."

(Reade's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 211.)

Of Voltaire's house "one of the rooms and a portion of the walls are included in the present mansion" (*ib.*, p. 214).]

mon. His declamation was fashioned to the pomp and cadence of the old stage; and he expressed the enthusiasm of poetry, rather than the feelings of nature.[1] My ardour, which soon became conspicuous, seldom failed of procuring me a ticket. The habits of pleasure fortified my taste for the French theatre, and that taste has perhaps abated my idolatry for the gigantic genius of Shakespeare, which is inculcated from our infancy as the first duty of an Englishman.[2] The wit and philosophy of Voltaire, his table and theatre, refined, in a visible degree, the manners of Lausanne; and, however addicted to study, I enjoyed my share of the amusements of society. After the representation of Monrepos I sometimes supped with the actors. I was now familiar in some, and acquainted in many houses; and my evenings were generally devoted to cards and conversation, either in private parties or numerous assemblies.

I hesitate, from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry, and is interwoven with the texture of French manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment. The personal attractions of

[1] [*Post*, p. 155.]

[2] [Gibbon had Hume and Adam Smith to support him in his taste. Hume wrote of John Home's *Douglas:* "I am persuaded it will be esteemed the best, and by French critics the only tragedy of our nation" (Burton's *Hume*, ii., 17). Adam Smith looked upon Racine's *Phèdre* as "the finest tragedy, perhaps, that is extant in any language" (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. 1801, i., 255).

Gibbon had no idolatry for the genius of Corneille. Of his *Attila* he says that "it opens with two ridiculous lines" (*The Decline*, iii., 422). In Attila's death Corneille "describes the irruption of blood in forty bombast lines" (*ib.*, p. 474).]

Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content with a small salary and laborious duty, in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays de Vaud from the county of Burgundy.[1] In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal, and even learned, education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty,[2] and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted

[1] *Extracts from the Journal.*—March, 1757.—I wrote some critical observations upon Plautus. March 8.—I wrote a long dissertation on some lines of Virgil. June.—I saw Mademoiselle Curchod—*Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.* August.—I went to Crassy, and staid two days. Sept. 15.—I went to Geneva. Oct. 15.—I came back to Lausanne, having passed through Crassy. Nov. 1.—I went to visit M. de Watteville at Loin, and saw Mademoiselle Curchod in my way through Rolle. Nov. 17.—I went to Crassy, and staid there six days. Jan. 1758.—In the three first months of this year I read Ovid's Metamorphoses, finished the conic sections with M. de Traytorrens, and went as far as the infinite series; I likewise read Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology, and wrote my critical observations upon it. Jan. 23.—I saw Alzire acted by the society at Monrepos.—GIBBON.

[The *Observations upon Plautus* are given in *Misc. Works*, iv., 435; two *Dissertations on Virgil, ib.*, iv., 441, 446 (the second of which is mentioned *ante*, p. 93), and the *Observations upon Newton's Chronology, ib.*, iii., 152. The quotation, *Omnia*, etc., is from Virgil's *Eclogues*, x., 69.

"Love conquers all, and we must yield to love."

(Dryden.)

Gibbon mentions De Watteville in a letter to Lord Sheffield about the French invasion of Savoy in 1792: "M. de Watteville, with whom you dined at my house last year, refused to accept the command of the Swiss succour of Geneva, till it was made his first instruction that he should never, in any case, surrender himself prisoner of war" (*Corres.*, ii., 316).]

[2] [Gibbon in writing to her said: "Nature endowed you with a beauty which would soften a tyrant and inflame an anchorite" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 334).]

me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honourably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion, and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity: but on my return to England I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle I yielded to my fate: I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son[1]; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself,[2] and my love subsided in friendship and esteem. The minister of Crassy soon afterwards died; his stipend died with him: his daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother; but in her lowest distress she maintained a spotless reputa-

[1] [Gibbon's conduct was the reverse of that of the Princess of whom he wrote: "Honoria sighed, yielded to the impulse of nature, and threw herself into the arms of her chamberlain Eugenius" (*The Decline*, iii., 456).

For Mlle de Curchod see Appendix 20.]

[2] [It is, I believe, to this passage that Miss Holroyd referred when she wrote: "The manner in which he mentions his first love, Mdme Necker, is very flattering; but even there he cannot help introducing a little sarcasm" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 274). She added: "She had the satisfaction of going out of the world with the knowledge of being his first and only love. Papa sent extracts of the passages where he mentioned her and the Severy family to Severy [*post*, p. 236, *n.*]; and she had the pleasure of reading them before her death" (*ib.*, p. 288). "There are several love letters of Mme Necker's among Mr. Gibbon's papers" (*ib.*, p. 293).

As she would have willingly married Gibbon, so was she eager for her daughter to marry Pitt. She wrote to her in 1783: "Je désirais que tu épousasses M. Pitt. . . . Tu n'as pas voulu me donner cette satisfaction" (D'Haussonville's *Le Salon de Madame Necker*, ii., 56). In 1790 her daughter (then Madame de Staël) wrote at Coppet (*post*, p. 221): "Nous possédons dans ce château M. Gibbon, l'ancien amoureux de ma mère, celui qui voulait l'épouser. Quand je le vois, je me demande si je serais née de son union avec ma mère: je me réponds que non et qu'il suffisait de mon père seul pour que je vinsse au monde" (*ib.*, ii., 250). On his death she wrote: "Ce pauvre Gibbon, dont tu m'as entendu parler comme du seul homme qui pût attacher à la Suisse, est mort en Angleterre. . . . On est étonné de voir périr autrement que par la révolution française" (*ib.*, p. 282).]

tion, and a dignified behaviour. A rich banker of Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth, as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker, the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy.[1]

Whatsoever have been the fruits of my education, they must be ascribed to the fortunate banishment which placed me at Lausanne. I have sometimes applied to my own fate the verses of Pindar, which remind an Olympic champion that his victory was the consequence of his exile; and that at home, like a domestic fowl, his days might have rolled away inactive or inglorious.

. . . ἠτοι καὶ τεά κεν,
Ἐνδομάχας ἄτ' ἀλέκτωρ,
Συγγόνῳ παρ' ἑστίᾳ
Ἀκλεὴς τιμᾶ κατεφυλλορόησεν ποδῶν·
Εἰ μὴ στάσις ἀντιάνειρα
Κνωσίας σ' ἄμερσε πάτρας.[2]
—*Olymp.* xii.

[1] [*Post*, p. 198. On Sept. 3, 1790, Necker "withdrew softly, almost privily. . . . Fifteen months ago we saw him coming, with escort of horse, with sound of clarion and trumpet; and now, at Arcis-sur-Aube, while he departs, unescorted, soundless, the Populace and Municipals stop him as a fugitive, are not unlike massacring him as a traitor; the National Assembly, consulted on the matter, gives him free egress as a nullity" (Carlyle's *French Revolution*, ed. 1857, i., 303).

"I passed four days [in October, 1790] at the castle of Copet with Necker," Gibbon wrote, "and could have wished to have shown him as a warning to any aspiring youth possessed with the demon of ambition. With all the means of private happiness in his power, he is the most miserable of human beings: the past, the present, and the future are equally odious to him. When I suggested some domestic amusements of books, building, etc., he answered with a deep tone of despair, 'Dans l'état où je suis, je ne puis sentir que le coup de vent qui m'a abattu'" (*Corres.*, ii., 236).]

[2] Thus, like the crested bird of Mars, at home
Engag'd in foul domestic jars,
And wasted with intestine wars,
Inglorious hadst thou spent thy vig'rous bloom;
Had not sedition's civil broils
Expell'd thee from thy native *Crete*,
And driv'n thee with more glorious toils
Th' *Olympic* crown in *Pisa's* plain to meet.
(West's *Pindar.*)—SHEFFIELD.

If my childish revolt against the religion of my country had not stripped me in time of my academic gown, the five important years, so liberally improved in the studies and conversation of Lausanne, would have been steeped in port and prejudice among the monks of Oxford. Had the fatigue of idleness compelled me to read, the path of learning would not have been enlightened by a ray of philosophic freedom. I should have grown to manhood ignorant of the life and language of Europe,[1] and my knowledge of the world would have been confined to an English cloister. But my religious error fixed me at Lausanne, in a state of banishment and disgrace. The rigid course of discipline and abstinence, to which I was condemned, invigorated the constitution of my mind and body; poverty and pride estranged me from my countrymen. One mischief, however, and in their eyes a serious and irreparable mischief, was derived from the success of my Swiss education; I had ceased to be an Englishman. At the flexible period of youth, from the age of sixteen to twenty-one, my opinions, habits, and sentiments were cast in a foreign mould; the faint and distant remembrance of England was almost obliterated; my native language was grown less familiar[2]; and I should have cheerfully accepted the offer of a moderate independence on the terms of perpetual exile. By the good sense and temper of Pavilliard my yolk was insensibly lightened: he left me master of my time and actions; but he could neither change my situation, nor increase my allowance, and with the progress of my years and reason I impatiently sighed for the moment of my deliverance. At length, in the spring of the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight, my father signified his permission and his pleasure that I should immediately return home. We were then in the midst of a war: the resentment of the French at our taking their ships without a declaration,[3]

[1] [*Post*, p. 132.]

[2] [From Gallicisms he never wholly "cleared his tongue"—or rather his pen.]

[3] [In the summer of 1755, though war had not been declared between England and France, it was actually carried on in the American settlements. The English cruisers began to prey on the French commerce. "Before the end of

had rendered that polite nation somewhat peevish and difficult. They denied a passage to English travellers, and the road through Germany was circuitous, toilsome, and perhaps in the neighbourhood of the armies, exposed to some danger. In this perplexity, two Swiss officers of my acquaintance in the Dutch service, who were returning to their garrisons, offered to conduct me through France as one of their companions; nor did we sufficiently reflect that my borrowed name and regimentals might have been considered, in case of a discovery, in a very serious light.[1] I took my leave of Lausanne on the 11th of April, 1758, with a mixture of joy and regret, in the firm resolution of revisiting, as a man, the persons and places which had been so dear to my youth.[2] We travelled slowly, but pleasantly, in a hired coach, over the hills of Franche-compté and the fertile province of Lorraine, and passed, without accident or inquiry, through several fortified towns of the French frontier: from thence we entered the wild Ardennes of the Austrian dutchy of Luxemburg; and after crossing the Meuse at Liege, we traversed the heaths of Brabant, and reached, on the fifteenth day, our Dutch garrison of Bois le Duc. In our passage through Nancy, my eye was gratified by the aspect of a regular and beautiful city, the work of Stanislaus, who, after the storms of Polish royalty, reposed in the love and gratitude of his new subjects of Lorraine.[3] In our halt at Maestricht I visited Mr. de Beau-

this year 300 French merchant ships, many of them extremely rich, and 8,000 of their sailors were brought into English ports." This was done "under the motive of self-defence, in order to deprive the French Court of the means of making an invasion, with which their Ministers in all the Courts of Europe had menaced England". War was formally declared in March, 1756 (Smollett's *England*, ed. 1800, iii., 442, 520-21).]

[1] [He would not have been detected by an English accent. "Il faut ajouter avec Suard qu'il prononçait avec affectation, et d'un ton de fausset, la langue française, laquelle il parlait d'ailleurs avec une rare correction et *comme un livre*" (*Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 439).]

[2] [He was thinking of himself and Lausanne in the following passage: "Julian inviolably preserved for Athens that tender regard which seldom fails to arise in a liberal mind, from the recollection of the place where it has discovered and exercised its growing powers" (*The Decline*, ii., 255).]

[3] [Stanislaus Leszczynski, the Palatine of Posen, supported by Charles XII. of Sweden, was elected King of Poland in 1704. He abdicated the throne in 1709, and in the end retired to France. In 1725 his daughter married

fort, a learned critic, who was known to me by his specious arguments against the five first centuries of the Roman History.[1] After dropping my regimental companions, I stepped aside to visit Rotterdam and the Hague. I wished to have observed a country, the monument of freedom and industry; but my days were numbered, and a longer delay would have been ungraceful. I hastened to embark at the Brill, landed the next day at Harwich,[2] and proceeded to London, where my father awaited my arrival. The whole term of my first absence from England was four years ten months and fifteen days.

In the prayers of the church our personal concerns are judiciously reduced to the threefold distinction of *mind, body,* and *estate*.[3] The sentiments of the mind excite and exercise our social sympathy. The review of my moral and literary character is the most interesting to myself and to the public; and I may expatiate, without reproach, on my private studies; since they have produced the public writings, which can alone entitle me to the esteem and friendship of my readers. The

Lewis XV. In 1733 he was a second time proclaimed king, and in 1735 by the Treaty of Vienna he made a second and a final abdication. "He was to enjoy possession of the duchies of Lorraine and Bar, which after his death were to be permanently united to France. In 1737 he was formally put in possession of his new territories. He died in 1766 at the age of eighty-nine" (*Poland*, by W. R. Morfill, ed. 1893, pp. 199-208).

Condorcet in his *Vie de Voltaire* thus writes of Stanislaus: "Retiré en Lorraine, où il n'avait encore que le nom de souverain, il réparait par ses bienfaits le mal que l'administration française fesait à cette province, où le gouvernement paternel de Léopold avait réparé un siècle de dévastations et malheurs. . . . Sa maison était celle d'un particulier très riche; son ton, celui d'un homme simple et franc qui, n'ayant jamais été malheureux que parce qu'on avait voulu qu'il fût roi, n'était pas ébloui d'un titre dont il n'avait éprouvé que les dangers" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, lxiv., 58).]

[1] ["Notre siècle, qui se croit destiné à changer les lois en tout genre, a enfanté un Pyrrhonisme historique, utile et dangereux. M. de Pouilly, esprit brilliant et superficiel, qui citait plus qu'il ne lisait, douta de la certitude des cinq premiers siècles de Rome; mais son imagination peu faite pour ces recherches céda facilement à l'érudition et à la critique de M. Freret et de l'Abbé Sallier. M. de Beaufort fit revivre cette controverse, et l'histoire Romaine souffrit beaucoup des attaques d'un écrivain qui savait douter et qui savait décider" (Gibbon, *Misc. Works*, iv., 40).]

[2] [He landed on May 4, 1758 (*Auto.*, p. 241).]

[3] ["Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body or estate" (*A Collect or Prayer for all Conditions of Men*).]

experience of the world inculcates a discreet reserve on the subject of our person and estate, and we soon learn that a free disclosure of our riches or poverty would provoke the malice of envy, or encourage the insolence of contempt.

The only person in England whom I was impatient to see was my aunt Porten, the affectionate guardian of my tender years. I hastened to her house in College-street, Westminster; and the evening was spent in the effusions of joy and confidence. It was not without some awe and apprehension that I approached the presence of my father. My infancy, to speak the truth, had been neglected at home[1]; the severity of his look and language at our last parting still dwelt on my memory; nor could I form any notion of his character, or my probable reception. They were both more agreeable than I could expect. The domestic discipline of our ancestors has been relaxed by the philosophy and softness of the age[2]; and if my father remembered that he had trembled before a stern parent,[3] it was only to adopt with his own son an opposite mode of behaviour. He received me as a man and a friend; all constraint was banished at our first interview, and we ever afterwards continued on the same terms of easy and equal politeness. He applauded the success of my education; every word and action was expressive of the most cordial affection; and our lives would have passed without a cloud, if his œconomy had been equal to his fortune, or if his fortune had been equal to his desires. During my absence he had married his second wife, Miss Dorothea Patton, who was introduced to me with the most

[1] [In dedicating to his father his *Essai* (*post*, p. 127) he speaks of "that truly paternal care which, from the first dawnings of my reason, has always watched over my education, and afforded me every opportunity of improvement" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 4). See *ante*, p. 30, for his mother's neglect of him.]

[2] ["When Johnson saw some young ladies in Lincolnshire who were remarkably well behaved, owing to their mother's strict discipline and severe correction, he exclaimed in one of Shakspeare's lines a little varied,

"*Rod*, I will honour thee for this thy duty."

(Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 46.)]

[3] [Not only his son, but his daughters feared him. "His children trembled in his presence" (*Auto.*, p. 17).]

unfavourable prejudice. I considered his second marriage as an act of displeasure, and I was disposed to hate the rival of my mother. But the injustice was in my own fancy,[1] and the imaginary monster was an amiable and deserving woman. I could not be mistaken in the first view of her understanding, her knowledge, and the elegant spirit of her conversation: her polite welcome, and her assiduous care to study and gratify my wishes, announced at least that the surface would be smooth; and my suspicions of art and falsehood were gradually dispelled by the full discovery of her warm and exquisite sensibility.[2] After some reserve on my side, our minds associated in confidence and friendship; and as Mrs. Gibbon had neither children nor the hopes of children, we more easily adopted the tender names and genuine characters of mother and of son. By the indulgence of these parents, I was left at liberty to consult my taste or reason in the choice of place, of company, and of amusements; and my excursions were bounded only by the limits of the island, and the measure of my income. Some faint efforts were made to procure me the employment of secretary to a foreign embassy[3]; and I listened to a scheme which would again have transported me to the continent. Mrs. Gibbon, with seeming wisdom, exhorted me to take chambers in the Temple, and devote my leisure to the study of the law. I cannot repent

[1] [The previous two lines are a patchwork from paragraphs in different Memoirs (*Auto.*, pp. 158, 242), both of which end with the line of Virgil—"Est mihi namque domi pater, est injusta noverca" (Virgil, *Eclogues*, iii., 33). The omission renders the connection not clear.

To his father he had written from Lausanne on June 4, 1757: "Assurez ma chère mère (c'est avec bien du plaisir que je lui donne ce titre) de tous les sentimens que ce nom sacré emporte avec lui" (*Corres.*, i., 12). See also *ib.*, p. 10, for a similar lie.]

[2] [She gave him trouble by her obstinacy, when he was trying "to disentangle himself from the management of the farm" at Buriton (*post*, p. 187). "She refused to yield an iota of her pretensions. . . . She is angry if she is not constantly consulted, and yet takes up everything with such absolute quickness that we all dread to consult her" (*Corres.*, i., 164). Though he was a most dutiful son, nevertheless, as her life was greatly prolonged, he began to count upon her death. Speaking of her by the name of her residence he wrote in 1789: "The decay of the Belvidere must place me in easy circumstance"; and again in 1791: "As soon as the Belvidere subsides I am rich beyond all my plans of expence at Lausanne" (*ib.*, ii., 196, 232). She outlived him.]

[3] [*Post*, p. 126.]

of having neglected her advice. Few men, without the spur of necessity, have resolution to force their way, through the thorns and thickets of that gloomy labyrinth. Nature had not endowed me with the bold and ready eloquence which makes itself heard amidst the tumult of the bar; and I should probably have been diverted from the labours of literature, without acquiring the fame or fortune of a successful pleader. I had no need to call to my aid the regular duties of a profession; every day, every hour, was agreeably filled; nor have I known, like so many of my countrymen, the tediousness of an idle life.

Of the two years (May 1758—May 1760) between my return to England and the embodying of the Hampshire militia, I passed about nine months in London, and the remainder in the country. The metropolis affords many amusements, which are open to all. It is itself an astonishing and perpetual spectacle to the curious eye; and each taste, each sense may be gratified by the variety of objects which will occur in the long circuit of a morning walk. I assiduously frequented the theatres at a very propitious æra of the stage, when a constellation of excellent actors, both in tragedy and comedy, was eclipsed by the meridian brightness of Garrick in the maturity of his judgment, and vigour of his performance.[1] The pleasures of a town-life are within the reach of every man who is regardless of his health, his money, and his company. By the contagion of example I was sometimes seduced; but the better habits, which I had formed at Lausanne, induced me to seek a more elegant and rational society; and if my search was less easy and successful than I might have hoped, I shall at present impute the failure to the disadvantages of my situation and character. Had the rank and fortune of my parents given them an annual establish-

[1] [In 1754, between Oct. 24 and Nov. 27, in the two theatres of Drury Lane and Covent Garden nine plays of Shakespeare were acted in nineteen performances, besides thirty-seven other plays by different authors—among them Addison, Cibber, Congreve, Gay, Jonson, Otway, and Rowe (*Gent. Mag.*, 1754, p. 532). I cannot find any entry for 1759, the space being taken up by war news and war lists.]

ment in London, their own house would have introduced me to a numerous and polite circle of acquaintance. But my father's taste had always preferred the highest and the lowest company, for which he was equally qualified[1]; and after a twelve years' retirement, he was no longer in the memory of the great with whom he had associated. I found myself a stranger in the midst of a vast and unknown city; and at my entrance into life I was reduced to some dull family parties, and some scattered connections, which were not such as I should have chosen for myself. The most useful friends of my father were the Mallets: they received me with civility and kindness at first on his account, and afterwards on my own; and (if I may use Lord Chesterfield's words) I was soon *domesticated*[2] in their house. Mr. Mallet, a name among the English poets, is praised by an unforgiving enemy, for the ease and elegance of his conversation,[3] and his wife was not destitute of wit or learning.[4] By his assistance I was introduced to Lady Hervey, the mother of the present Earl of Bristol. Her age and infirmities confined her at home; her dinners were select; in the evening her house was open to the best company of both sexes and all nations; nor was I displeased at her preference and even affectation of the manners, the

[1] [" My father had always delighted in a club of peers or of farmers, for which he was equally qualified" (*Auto.*, p. 245; see *post*, p. 186).]

[2] [Perhaps Gibbon refers to Chesterfield's letter to his son, dated March 29, 1750 (ed. 1774, iii., 2), where, speaking of a certain house, he says: "Domesticate yourself there while you stay at Naples".]

[3] [" His conversation was easy and elegant. The rest of his character may, without injury to his memory, sink into silence" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 468). Johnson, so far as I am aware, was not his personal enemy.]

[4] ["Mallet's second wife was the daughter of a nobleman's steward, who had a considerable fortune, which she took care to retain in her own hands" (*ib.*, p. 467). The following entry is in *The Gent. Mag.* for 1742, p. 546: "Oct. 7, 1742. David Mallet Esq. Under-Secretary to the Pr. of Wales to Miss Lucy Elstob with £10,000." I have seen the following entry in Mrs. Piozzi's handwriting: "D. Mallet married a Miss Elstob—a famous wit and an infidel".

"I never," wrote Lord Charlemont, "saw Hume so much disconcerted as by the petulance of Mrs. Mallet. This lady, who was not acquainted with him, meeting him at an assembly boldly accosted him in these words: 'Mr. Hume, give me leave to introduce myself to you; we deists ought to know each other'. 'Madame,' replied he, 'I am no deist. I do not style myself so, neither do I desire to be known by that appellation'" (*Life of Charlemont*, i., 235).

For a curious description of her by Gibbon see *Corres.*, i., 315.]

language, and the literature of France.[1] But my progress in the English world was in general left to my own efforts, and those efforts were languid and slow. I had not been endowed by art or nature with those happy gifts of confidence and address, which unlock every door and every bosom; nor would it be reasonable to complain of the just consequences of my sickly childhood, foreign education, and reserved temper. While coaches were rattling through Bond-street, I have passed many a solitary evening in my lodging with my books. My studies were sometimes interrupted by a sigh, which I breathed towards Lausanne; and on the approach of Spring, I withdrew without reluctance from the noisy and extensive scene of crowds without company, and dissipation without pleasure. In each of the twenty-five years of my acquaintance with London (1758—1783) the prospect gradually brightened; and this unfavourable picture most properly belongs to the first period after my return from Switzerland.

My father's residence in Hampshire, where I have passed many light, and some heavy hours, was at Buriton, near Petersfield, one mile from the Portsmouth road, and at the easy distance of fifty-eight miles from London.[2] An old mansion, in a state of decay, had been converted into the fashion and convenience of a modern house: and if strangers

[1] [Lady Hervey was "Molly Lepell". Gay, in his *Mr. Pope's Welcome from Greece*, had described her as:—

"Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepell."

(Warton's *Pope's Works*, ed. 1822, ii., 354.)

Pope, in his *Answer to the Following Question of Mrs. How: What is Prudery?* had written:—

"'Tis an ugly envious Shrew,
That rails at dear Lepell and You"

(*ib.*, ii., 314).

Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son in 1750: "Lady Hervey, to my great joy, because to your great advantage, passes all this winter at Paris. She has been bred all her life at Courts, of which she has acquired all the easy good-breeding and politeness, without the frivolousness. She has all the reading that a woman should have, and more than any woman need have; for she understands Latin perfectly well, though she wisely conceals it" (Chesterfield's *Letters*, iii., 54).]

[2] The estate and manor of Beriton, otherwise Buriton, were considerable, and were sold a few years ago to Lord Stawell.—SHEFFIELD. [They were sold in 1789 for £16,000 (*Corres.*, ii., 189; see *ante*, p. 37).]

had nothing to see, the inhabitants had little to desire. The spot was not happily chosen, at the end of the village and the bottom of the hill: but the aspect of the adjacent grounds was various and cheerful; the downs commanded a noble prospect, and the long hanging woods in sight of the house could not perhaps have been improved by art or expence. My father kept in his own hands the whole of the estate, and even rented some additional land; and whatsoever might be the balance of profit and loss, the farm supplied him with amusement and plenty. The produce maintained a number of men and horses, which were multiplied by the intermixture of domestic and rural servants; and in the intervals of labour the favourite team, a handsome set of bays or greys, was harnessed to the coach. The œconomy of the house was regulated by the taste and prudence of Mrs. Gibbon. She prided herself in the elegance of her occasional dinners; and from the uncleanly avarice of Madame Pavilliard, I was suddenly transported to the daily neatness and luxury of an English table. Our immediate neighbourhood was rare and rustic; but from the verge of our hills, as far as Chichester and Goodwood, the western district of Sussex was interspersed with noble seats and hospitable families, with whom we cultivated a friendly, and might have enjoyed a very frequent, intercourse. As my stay at Buriton was always voluntary, I was received and dismissed with smiles; but the comforts of my retirement did not depend on the ordinary pleasures of the country. My father could never inspire me with his love and knowledge of farming. I never handled a gun,[1] I seldom mounted an horse; and my philosophic walks were soon terminated by a shady bench, where I was long detained by the sedentary amusement of reading or meditation.[2] At

[1] ["It is the peculiar praise of the Roman jurisprudence that it asserts the claim of the first occupant to the wild animals of the earth, the air and the waters" (*The Decline*, iv., 485).]

[2] [Sainte-Beuve, after quoting this passage, continues: "Le sentiment de la nature champêtre n'est pas étranger à Gibbon; il y a dans ses *Mémoires* deux ou trois endroits qui prêtent à la rêverie: le passage que je viens de citer, par exemple, toute cette page qui nous rend un joli tableau de la vie anglaise, posée,

home I occupied a pleasant and spacious apartment; the library on the same floor was soon considered as my particular domain; and I might say with truth, that I was never less alone than when by myself.[1] My sole complaint, which I piously suppressed, arose from the kind restraint imposed on the freedom of my time. By the habit of early rising I always secured a sacred portion of the day, and many scattered moments were stolen and employed by my studious industry. But the family hours of breakfast, of dinner, of tea, and of supper, were regular and long: after breakfast Mrs. Gibbon expected my company in her dressing-room; after tea my father claimed my conversation and the perusal of the newspapers; and in the midst of an interesting work I was often called down to receive the visit of some idle neighbours.[2] Their dinners and visits required, in due season, a similar return; and I dreaded the period of the full moon, which was usually reserved for our more distant excursions. I could not refuse attending my father, in the summer of 1759, to the races at Stockbridge, Reading, and Odiam, where he had entered a horse for the hunter's plate; and I was not displeased with the sight of our Olympic games, the beauty of

réglée, studieuse". Sainte-Beuve goes on to refer to the fine passage where the historian laid down his pen as he finished the last lines of his History (*post*, p. 225), and continues: "Mais, dans tous ces passages, c'est encore le studieux chez Gibbon qui goûte la nature" (*Causeries*, viii., 443).]

[1] ["P. Scipionem, Marce fili, eum qui primus Africanus appellatus est, dicere solitum scripsit Cato, qui fuit ejus fere æqualis, nunquam se minus otiosum esse quam quum otiosus, nec minus solum quam quum solus esset" (Cicero, *De Officiis*, iii., 1).

"It was accounted the peculiar of philosophers and wise men to be able to hold themselves in talk. And it was their boast on this account, 'That they were never less alone than when by themselves'" (Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*, ed. 1714, i., 170).]

[2] [Grote suffered in the same way. At the age of twenty-two he recorded: "My studies have not lately been so regular as they might have been. . . . A numerous family [his father's] and the present artificial state of society absolutely imprison me to such an extent that I can enjoy but very little solitude. And it is dull and wretched to the last degree to a mind which has a glimpse of a nobler sphere of action, to witness the total exclusion of intellect which disgraces general conversation" (*Life of Grote*, ed. 1873, p. 13). A year later he wrote: "I regretted this continual waste of evenings beyond measure, and longed for the time when my house and my hours should be under my command" (*ib.*, p. 20).]

the spot, the fleetness of the horses, and the gay tumult of the numerous spectators. As soon as the militia business was agitated many days were tediously consumed in meetings of deputy-lieutenants at Petersfield, Alton, and Winchester.[1] In the close of the same year, 1759, Sir Simeon (then Mr.) Stewart attempted an unsuccessful contest for the county of Southampton, against Mr. Legge, Chancellor of the Exchequer: a well-known contest, in which Lord Bute's influence was first exerted and censured.[2] Our canvas at Portsmouth and Gosport lasted several days; but the interruption of my studies was compensated in some degree by the spectacle of English manners, and the acquisition of some practical knowledge.

If in a more domestic or more dissipated scene my application was somewhat relaxed, the love of knowledge was inflamed and gratified by the command of books; and I compared the poverty of Lausanne with the plenty of London. My father's study at Buriton was stuffed with much trash of the last

[1] [*Post*, p. 134. Blackstone, writing of the Militia Act of 1757, says: "The general scheme is to discipline a certain number of the inhabitants of every county, chosen by lot for three years, and officered by the Lord Lieutenant, the Deputy Lieutenants, and other principal landholders, under a commission from the Crown" (*Commentaries*, ed. 1775, i., 412).

Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son on Sept. 23, 1757: "You may remember I said at first, that the popularity would soon be on the side of those who opposed the popular Militia Bill; and now it appears so with a vengeance in almost every county of England, by the tumults and insurrections of the people, who swear that they will not be inlisted" (*Letters to his Son*, iv., 95). In the East Riding of Yorkshire "farmers and country people, out of forty townships, armed with guns, scythes and clubs, rose on account of the Act" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1757, p. 431). Two of these rioters were hanged, and four transported for life (*ib.*, 1758, p. 239). In the same *Magazine*, July, 1759, p. 341, it is stated that, under the threat of a French invasion, "the militia that have been raised and disciplined have been marched to the places of greatest danger".]

[2] [It was a bye-election. Legge, who as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had provided the funds for Pitt's armaments, resigned his seat for Oxford, so as to stand. Horace Walpole describes this election as "an incident that led to a discovery of some of the secret politics of the Heir-apparent's Court" (*Memoirs of George II.*, ii., 399). Burke describes the growth of *influence* under Bute in *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (Burke's *Select Works*, ed. E. J. Payne, i., 10). The Gibbons, as Tories, supported Stewart.

Gray, on April 22, 1760, described a duel between Stewart and the Duke of Bolton: "They met near Mary-le-bone, and the D., in making a pass, over-reached himself, fell down and hurt his knee; the other bid him get up, but he could not; then he bid him ask his life, but he would not; so he let him alone, and that's all. Mr. Stewart was slightly wounded" (Mitford's *Gray's Works*, iii., 238). The Duke was Lord Lieutenant of the county (*post*, p. 136).]

age, with much high church divinity and politics, which have long since gone to their proper place[1]: yet it contained some valuable editions of the classics and the fathers, the choice, as it should seem, of Mr. Law; and many English publications of the times had been occasionally added. From this slender beginning I have gradually formed a numerous and select library, the foundation of my works, and the best comfort of my life, both at home and abroad. On the receipt of the first quarter, a large share of my allowance was appropriated to my literary wants. I cannot forget the joy with which I exchanged a bank-note of twenty pounds for the twenty volumes of the Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions; nor would it have been easy, by any other expenditure of the same sum, to have procured so large and lasting a fund of rational amusement. At a time when I most assiduously frequented this school of ancient literature, I thus expressed my opinion of a learned and various collection, which since the year 1759 has been doubled in magnitude, though not in merit.[2] "Une de ces sociétés, qui ont mieux immortalisé Louis XIV. qu'une ambition souvent pernicieuse aux hommes, commençait déjà ces recherches qui réunissent la justesse de l'esprit, l'aménité et l'érudition: où l'on voit tant de dècouvertes, et quelquefois, ce qui ne cède qu'à peine aux découvertes, une *ignorance* modeste et *savante*."[3] The review of my library must be reserved for the period of its maturity; but in this place I may allow myself to observe, that I am not conscious of having ever bought a book from a motive

[1] [Gibbon, describing the pillage of the libraries of Constantinople by the Turks, says: "Ten volumes might be purchased for a single ducat; and the same ignominious price, too high perhaps for a shelf of theology, included the whole works of Aristotle and Homer, the noblest productions of the science and literature of ancient Greece" (*The Decline*, vii., 198).]

[2] [Gibbon quotes from his *Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature* (*Misc. Works*, iv., 19).]

[3] ["Cette Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres est proprement la patrie intellectuelle de Gibbon; il y habite en idée, il en étudie les travaux originaux ou solides rendus avec justesse et parfois avec agrément; il en apprécie les découvertes, 'et surtout ce qui ne cède qu'à peine aux découvertes, dit-il en véritable Attique, une *ignorance modeste et savante*'" (*Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 444).]

of ostentation, that every volume, before it was deposited on the shelf, was either read or sufficiently examined, and that I soon adopted the tolerating maxim of the elder Pliny, "nullum esse librum tam malum ut non ex aliquâ parte prodesset".[1] I could not yet find leisure or courage to renew the pursuit of the Greek language, excepting by reading the lessons of the Old and New Testament every Sunday, when I attended the family to church.[2] The series of my Latin authors was less strenuously completed; but the acquisition, by inheritance or purchase, of the best editions of Cicero, Quintilian, Livy, Tacitus, Ovid, etc., afforded a fair prospect, which I seldom neglected. I persevered in the useful method of abstracts and observations; and a single example may suffice, of a note which had almost swelled into a work. The solution of a passage of Livy (xxxviii., 38), involved me in the dry and dark treatises of Greaves, Arbuthnot, Hooper, Bernard, Eisenschmidt, Gronovius, La Barré, Freret, etc.[3]; and in my French essay (chap. 20), I ridiculously send the reader to my own *manuscript* remarks on the weights, coins, and measures of the ancients,[4] which were abruptly terminated by the militia drum.

As I am now entering on a more ample field of society and study, I can only hope to avoid a vain and prolix garrulity, by overlooking the vulgar crowd of my acquaintance, and confining myself to such intimate friends among books and men, as are best entitled to my notice by their own merit and reputation, or by the deep impression which they have

[1] [The younger Pliny wrote of his uncle: "Nihil enim legit quod non excerperet; dicere etiam solebat nullum esse librum tam malum, ut non aliqua parte prodesset" (*Epist.*, iii., 5, 10).]

[2] [They commonly went twice to church every Sunday. This reading, with the study that it led to at home, began, or, at all events, increased, his doubts. Towards the end of 1759 he read Grotius's *De Veritate Religionis Christianæ*, and his scepticism was only the more confirmed (*Auto.*, p. 249).

Grotius was one of the three writers whom Johnson said he "would recommend to every man whose faith is yet unsettled" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 398. See also *ib.*, i., 454).]

[3] [This passage of Livy Gibbon refers to in his *Principes des Poids, des Monnaies*, etc. (*Misc. Works*, v. 73). At the beginning of the same essay he gives a brief account of most of these writers (*ib.*, p. 67).]

[4] ["V. mes Rem. MSS. sur les poids, etc., des anciens" (*ib.*, iv., 34).]

left on my mind. Yet I will embrace this occasion of recommending to the young student a practice, which about this time I myself adopted. After glancing my eye over the design and order of a new book, I suspended the perusal till I had finished the task of self-examination, till I had revolved, in a solitary walk, all that I knew or believed, or had thought on the subject of the whole work, or of some particular chapter: I was then qualified to discern how much the author added to my original stock; and if I was sometimes satisfied by the agreement, I was sometimes armed by the opposition of our ideas. The favourite companions of my leisure were our English writers since the Revolution: they breathe the spirit of reason and liberty; and they most seasonably contributed to restore the purity of my own language, which had been corrupted by the long use of a foreign idiom. By the judicious advice of Mr. Mallet, I was directed to the writings of Swift and Addison; wit and simplicity are their common attributes: but the style of Swift is supported by manly original vigour; that of Addison is adorned by the female graces of elegance and mildness. The old reproach, that no British altars had been raised to the muse of history,[1] was recently disproved by the first performances of Robertson and Hume, the histories of Scotland and of the Stuarts. I will assume the presumption of saying, that I was not unworthy to read them: nor will I disguise my different feelings in the repeated perusals. The perfect composition, the nervous language, the well-turned periods of Dr. Robertson, inflamed me to the ambitious hope that I might one day tread in his footsteps: the calm philosophy, the careless, inimitable beauties of his friend and rival, often forced me to close the volume with a mixed sensation of delight and despair.[2]

The design of my first work, the Essay on the Study of Literature, was suggested by a refinement of vanity, the desire of justifying and praising the object of a favourite pursuit.

[1] [See Appendix 21.]

[2] [*Ib.*, 22. *Post*, 195.]

In France, to which my ideas were confined, the learning and language of Greece and Rome were neglected by a philosophic age. The guardian of those studies, the Academy of Inscriptions, was degraded to the lowest rank among the three royal societies of Paris: the new appellation of Erudits was contemptuously applied to the successors of Lipsius and Casaubon,[1] and I was provoked to hear (see M. d'Alembert, *Discours préliminaire à l'Encyclopédie*) that the exercise of the memory, their sole merit, had been superseded by the nobler faculties of the imagination and the judgment.[2] I was ambitious of proving by my own example, as well as by my precepts, that all the faculties of the mind may be exercised and displayed by the study of ancient literature: I began to select and adorn the various proofs and illustrations which had offered themselves in reading the classics; and the first pages or chapters of my essay were composed before my departure from Lausanne. The hurry of the journey, and of the first weeks of my English life, suspended all thoughts of serious application: but my object was ever before my eyes; and no more than ten days, from the first to the eleventh of July, were suffered to elapse after my summer establishment at Buriton. My essay was finished in about six weeks; and as soon as a fair copy had been transcribed by one of the French prisoners at Petersfield,[3] I looked round for a critic and judge of my first performance. A writer can seldom be content

[1] [Gibbon says in his *Essay:* "Nos beaux-esprits ont senti quels avantages leur reviendraient de l'ignorance de leurs lecteurs. Ils ont comblé de mépris les anciens, et ceux qui les étudient encore. On a ôté à cette étude le nom de Belles-Lettres, qu'une longue prescription semblait lui avoir consacré, pour y substituer celui d'érudition. Nos littérateurs sont devenus des érudits" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 20).]

[2] ["La division générale de nos connaissances, suivant nos trois facultés, a cet avantage, qu'elle pourrait fournir aussi les trois divisions du monde littéraire, en *érudits*, *philosophes* et *beaux-esprits*. . . . La mémoire est le talent des premiers, la sagacité appartient aux seconds, et les derniers ont l'agrément en partage," etc. (*Œuvres de D'Alembert*, ed. 1805, i., 242).

Voltaire writes in his *Siècle de Louis XIV* (chap. xxxiv.): "Il n'y a pas un ancien philosophe qui serve aujourd'hui [1740] à l'instruction de la jeunesse chez les nations éclairées. . . ." (*Œuvres*, xviii., 276).]

[3] [At the end of the following year (1759) a large subscription was raised for cloathing the French prisoners, "who were perishing with cold" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 353, *n.*).]

with the doubtful recompence of solitary approbation[1]; but a youth ignorant of the world, and of himself, must desire to weigh his talents in some scales less partial than his own: my conduct was natural, my motive laudable, my choice of Dr. Maty judicious and fortunate. By descent and education Dr. Maty, though born in Holland, might be considered as a Frenchman; but he was fixed in London by the practice of physic, and an office in the British Museum.[2] His reputation was justly founded on the eighteen volumes of the *Journal Britannique,* which he had supported, almost alone, with perseverance and success. This humble though useful labour, which had once been dignified by the genius of Bayle and the learning of Le Clerc,[3] was not disgraced by the taste, the knowledge, and the judgment of Maty: he exhibits a candid and pleasing view of the state of literature in England during a period of six years (January, 1750—December, 1755)[4]; and, far different from his angry son,[5] he handles the rod of criticism with the tenderness and reluctance of a parent.

[1] ["The author himself is the best judge of his own performance" (*Post*, p. 191).]

[2] [In *The Gent. Mag.* for July, 1756, p. 362, is a list of the staff of the British Museum—one Principal Keeper, three Librarians, of whom Maty was second, and three Assistants. How much science preponderated in the foundation is shown by the Keeper and the first two Librarians being Doctors of Medicine. In the *Magazine* for Dec., 1758, p. 629, are given the rules for admission, under which visitors long suffered.]

[3] [Bayle in 1684 began his *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, and Le Clerc in 1686 his *Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique.*]

[4] [It was a monthly publication in 12mo, published at the Hague. Each volume contained four numbers. Johnson, in 1755, having finished his *Dictionary*, was thinking of undertaking a Review. "Dr. Adams suggested, that as Dr. Maty had just then finished his *Bibliothèque Britannique*, which was a well-executed work, giving foreigners an account of British publications, he might, with great advantage, assume him as an assistant. 'He (said Johnson), the little black dog! I'd throw him into the Thames'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 284).]

[5] [Paul Henry Maty, editor of *The New Review*. Cowper wrote of him in 1786: "I have authentic intelligence of his being a critical character in all its forms, acute, sour, and blunt; and so incorruptible withal, and so unsusceptible of bias from undue motives, that, as my correspondent informs me, he would not praise his own mother, did he not think she deserved it" (Southey's *Cowper*, v., 245). Maty reviewed the specimen of the poet's *Homer*. "His animadversions," Cowper wrote, "in part appeared to me unjust, and in part ill-natured; and yet the man himself being an oracle in everybody's account, I apprehended that he had done me much mischief" (*ib.*, p. 309).]

The author of the *Journal Britannique* sometimes aspires to the character of a poet and philosopher: his style is pure and elegant; and in his virtues, or even in his defects, he may be ranked as one of the last disciples of the school of Fontenelle.[1] His answer to my first letter was prompt and polite: after a careful examination he returned my manuscript, with some animadversion and much applause; and when I visited London in the ensuing winter, we discussed the design and execution in several free and familiar conversations. In a short excursion to Buriton I reviewed my essay, according to his friendly advice; and after suppressing a third, adding a third, and altering a third, I consummated my first labour by a short preface, which is dated February 3, 1759.[2] Yet I still shrunk from the press with the terrors of virgin modesty: the manuscript was safely deposited in my desk; and as my attention was engaged by new objects, the delay might have been prolonged till I had fulfilled the precept of Horace, "nonumque prematur in annum".[3] Father Sirmond, a learned Jesuit, was still more rigid, since he advised a young friend to expect the mature age of fifty, before he gave himself or his writings to the public (Olivet, Histoire de l'Académie Française, tom. ii. p. 143). The counsel was singular; but it is still more singular that it should have been approved by the example of the author. Sirmond was himself fifty-five years of age

[1] [Grimm, recording Fontenelle's death on Feb. 11, 1757, has left an interesting criticism of him and his school. He attributes to him "le mérite réel d'avoir rendu le premier la philosophie populaire en France. . . . Il est vrai que M. de Fontenelle, en nous éclairant ainsi, a pensé porter un coup funeste au goût de la nation. Son style, son coloris et sa manière d'écrire offrent une vaste carrière au faux bel esprit. . . . Pour juger de la grandeur du péril que nous avons couru, pour sentir combien cette manière qu'on voulait établir était détestable, on n'a qu'à lire les copistes de M. de Fontenelle; rien n'est plus déplaisant, ni plus insupportable que les ouvrages dont ils ont accablé le public. . . . Ce grand homme [Voltaire] est venu à point nommé pour arrêter les progrès du faux bel esprit" (*Mémoires Historiques*, etc., ed. 1814, i., 334-5).]

[2] [On Dec. 30, 1758, he wrote: "At last Maty and I have downright quarrelled. He behaved so very contemptuously to me" (*Corres.*, i., 21). They must have been reconciled later on.]

[3] [*De Arte Poetica*, l. 388.

"Keep your piece nine years."

(Pope, *Prol. Sat.*, l. 40.)]

when he published (in 1614) his first work, an edition of Sidonius Apollinaris, with many valuable annotations: (see his life, before the great edition of his works in five volumes folio, Paris, 1696, e Typographiâ Regiâ).[1]

Two years elapsed in silence: but in the spring of 1761 I yielded to the authority of a parent, and complied, like a pious son, with the wish of my own heart.[2] My private resolves were influenced by the state of Europe. About this time the belligerent powers had made and accepted overtures of peace; our English plenipotentiaries were named to assist at the Congress of Augsburg, which never met[3]; I wished to attend them as a gentleman or a secretary; and my father fondly believed that the proof of some literary talents might introduce me to public notice, and second the recommendations of my friends. After a last revisal I consulted with Mr. Mallet and Dr. Maty, who approved the design and promoted the execution. Mr. Mallet, after hearing me read my manuscript, received it from my hands, and delivered it into those of Becket, with whom he made an agreement in my name; an easy agreement: I required only a certain number of copies[4]; and, without transferring my property, I

[1] ["Sirmond (*Jacques*), jésuite, né vers l'an 1559. L'un des plus savans et des plus aimables hommes de son temps. . . . Ses nombreux ouvrages furent très estimés, et sont très peu lus. Mort en 1651" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 168).

Pattison says of the works of the Jesuits: "'Learned' they are entitled to be called by courtesy, for the works of Schott, Sirmond, and Petavius, have all the attributes of learning but one—one, to want which leaves all learning but a tinkling cymbal—that is, the love of truth. The Jesuit scholars introduced into philological research the temper of unveracity which had been from of old the literary habit of their Church. An interested motive lurks beneath each word; the motive of Church patriotism" (*Life of Casaubon*, ed. 1892, p. 462).]

[2] [In an interleaved copy Gibbon wrote: "Mon père voulut me le faire publier l'hiver passé. Ma jeunesse, et un fonds d'orgueil, qui me rend beaucoup plus sensible aux critiques qu'aux éloges, m'empêchèrent de goûter son projet. Mais me trouvant à la campagne avec lui au mois de Mars, il renouvella ses instances d'une manière si vive que je ne pus m'en défendre" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 1; see *post*, p. 242).]

[3] ["March 7, 1761. We are in the utmost hopes of a peace; a Congress is agreed upon at Augsbourg.

"Aug. 17, 1761. In the meantime, adieu peace! France has refused to submit to our terms. They own themselves undone, but depend on the continuation of the war for revenging them—not by arms, but by exhausting us" (Walpole's *Letters*, iii., 381, 428).]

[4] [He received forty (*Misc. Works*, iv., 1).]

devolved on the bookseller the charges and profits of the edition. Dr. Maty undertook, in my absence, to correct the sheets: he inserted, without my knowledge, an elegant and flattering epistle to the author; which is composed, however, with so much art, that, in case of a defeat, his favourable report might have been ascribed to the indulgence of a friend for the rash attempt of a *young English gentleman*. The work was printed and published, under the title of Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature, à Londres, chez T. Becket et P. A. de Hondt, 1761, in a small volume in duodecimo: my dedication to my father, a proper and pious address, was composed the twenty-eighth of May: Dr. Maty's letter is dated the 16th of June; and I received the first copy (June 23) at Alresford, two days before I marched with the Hampshire militia. Some weeks afterwards, on the same ground, I presented my book to the late Duke of York,[1] who breakfasted in Colonel Pitt's tent. By my father's direction, and Mallet's advice, my literary gifts were distributed to several eminent characters in England and France; two books were sent to the Count de Caylus,[2] and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon,[3] at Paris: I had

[1] [The following is from a letter written by a lady in January, 1789: "Here's two anecdotes of the wise Duke of Cumberland [the brother of George III.]; one came from Sir Joshua Reynolds himself. The Duchess was sitting for her picture; the Duke came in, tumbled about the room in his awkward manner, without speaking to Sir Joshua. The Duchess thought it too bad, and whispered to him her opinion; upon which he came, and leaning on Sir Joshua's chair while he was painting, said, 'What! you always begin with the head first, do you?' And once, when at his own public day he was told he ought to say something to Mr. Gibbon, 'So,' says he, 'I suppose you are at the old trade again—scribble, scribble, scribble'" (*Auckland Corres.*, ii., 281).

H. D. Best in his *Memorials*, p. 68, makes the Duke of Gloucester the hero of the story. When Gibbon brought him the second volume of the *Decline and Fall*, "he received him with much good nature and affability, saying to him, as he laid the quarto on the table, 'Another d—d thick, square book! Always scribble, scribble, scribble! Eh! Mr. Gibbon?'"

Horace Walpole, writing in 1760 (*Letters*, iii., 347), says that "the Duke of York was, as he always is, extremely good-humoured," so that Gibbon's book was, no doubt, kindly received.]

[2] [Voltaire (*Œuvres*, x., 195) describes Caylus as "célèbre par son goût pour les arts. . . . Il grave lui-même, et met une expression singulière dans ses dessins." Gibbon read his *Dissertations upon Ancient Painting, etc.* (*Misc. Works*, iii., 79; v., 214). See *post*, Appendix 28.]

[3] ["Cette dame, surnommée *la sœur du pot* par les philosophes à qui elle donnait à dîner, et de qui elle aimait à être entourée, était remplie d'esprit, de grâce, de beauté" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, lxiii., 57).]

reserved twenty copies for my friends at Lausanne, as the first fruits of my education, and a grateful token of my remembrance: and on all these persons I levied an unavoidable tax of civility and compliment. It is not surprising that a work, of which the style and sentiments were so totally foreign, should have been more successful abroad than at home. I was delighted by the copious extracts, the warm commendations, and the flattering predictions of the Journals of France and Holland: and the next year (1762) a new edition (I believe at Geneva) extended the fame, or at least the circulation of the work. In England it was received with cold indifference, little read, and speedily forgotten: a small impression was slowly dispersed; the bookseller murmured, and the author (had his feelings been more exquisite) might have wept over the blunders and baldness of the English translation.[1] The publication of my History fifteen years afterwards revived the memory of my first performance, and the Essay was eagerly sought in the shops. But I refused the Permission which Becket solicited of reprinting it: the public curiosity was imperfectly satisfied by a pirated copy of the booksellers of Dublin; and when a copy of the original edition has been discovered in a sale, the primitive value of half-a-crown has risen to the fanciful price of a guinea or thirty shillings.[2]

I have expatiated on the petty circumstances and period of my first publication, a memorable æra in the life of a student, when he ventures to reveal the measure of his mind: his hopes and fears are multiplied by the idea of self-importance, and he believes for a while that the eyes of mankind are fixed on his person and performance. Whatever may be my present reputation, it no longer rests on the merit of this first essay; and at the end of twenty-eight years I may

[1] [Gibbon recorded on January 11, 1763, just before leaving England: "I went to Becket, paid him his bill (£54), and gave him back his translation. It must be printed, though very indifferent. My comfort is that my misfortune is not an uncommon one" (*Misc. Works*, i., 157).]

[2] [I have lately been offered a copy of the original edition for 18s. 6d., and of the translation for 12s.]

appreciate[1] my juvenile work with the impartiality, and almost with the indifference of a stranger. In his answer to Lady Hervey, the Count de Caylus admires, or affects to admire, "les livres sans nombre que Mr. Gibbon a lus et très bien lus".[2] But, alas! my stock of erudition at that time was scanty and superficial; and if I allow myself the liberty of naming the Greek masters, my genuine and personal acquaintance was confined to the Latin classics. The most serious defect of my Essay is a kind of obscurity and abruptness which always fatigues, and may often elude, the attention of the reader. Instead of a precise and proper definition of the title itself, the sense of the word *Littérature* is loosely and variously applied: a number of remarks and examples, historical, critical, philosophical, are heaped on each other without method or connection; and if we except some introductory pages, all the remaining chapters might indifferently be reversed or transposed. The obscurity of many passages is often affected, *brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*[3]; the desire of expressing perhaps a common idea with sententious and oracular brevity: alas! how fatal has been the imitation of Montesquieu![4] But this obscurity sometimes proceeds from a mixture of light and darkness in the author's mind; from a partial ray which strikes upon an angle, instead of spreading itself over the surface of an object. After this fair confession I shall presume to say, that the Essay does credit to a young writer of two and twenty years of age, who had read with taste, who thinks with freedom, and who writes in a foreign language with spirit and elegance. The defence of the early History of Rome[5] and the new Chronology of Sir Isaac Newton[6] form a specious argument. The patriotic and

[1] [*Appreciate* is not in Johnson's *Dictionary*.] [2] [*Misc. Works*, ii., 43.]

[3] [*De Arte Poetica*, l. 25. "I strive to be concise, I prove obscure" (Francis).]

[4] [Sainte-Beuve says of the *Essai*: "Le français est de quelqu'un qui a beaucoup lu Montesquieu et qui l'imite; c'est du français correct, mais artificiel" (*Causeries*, viii., 446). For Dr. Maty's criticism of the French, see *post*, p. 134.]

[5] [*Misc. Works*, iv., 40.] [6] [*Ib.*, iv., 49; *ante*, pp. 45, 63.]

political design of the Georgics is happily conceived; and any probable conjecture, which tends to raise the dignity of the poet and the poem, deserves to be adopted, without a rigid scrutiny.[1] Some dawnings of a philosophic spirit enlighten the general remarks on the study of history and of man.[2] I am not displeased with the inquiry into the origin and nature of the gods of polytheism,[3] which might deserve the illustration of a riper judgment. Upon the whole, I may apply to the first labour of my pen the speech of a far superior artist, when he surveyed the first productions of his pencil. After viewing some portraits which he had painted in his youth, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds[4] acknowledged to me that he was rather humbled than flattered by the comparison with his present works; and that after so much time and study, he had conceived his improvement to be much greater than he found it to have been.

At Lausanne I composed the first chapters of my Essay in French, the familiar language of my conversation and studies, in which it was easier for me to write than in my mother tongue. After my return to England I continued the same practice, without any affectation, or design of repudiating (as Dr. Bentley would say) my vernacular idiom.[5] But I should

[1] [Gibbon, after describing how Augustus distributed farms among his soldiers, continues: "Les hardis vétérans n'avaient acheté leurs possessions que par une guerre sanglante, et leurs fréquens actes de violence montraient assez qu'ils se croyaient toujours les armes à la main. Qu'y avait-il alors de plus assorti à la douce politique d'Auguste, que d'employer les chants harmonieux de son ami pour les réconcilier à leur nouvel état?" (*Misc. Works*, iv., p. 35.)]

[2] [In this part of his *Essai* Gibbon has the following marginal headings: "L'Esprit Philosophique. Prétensions à l'esprit philosophique. Ce qu'il n'est pas. Ce qu'il est. Le secours qu'il peut tirer de la littérature. L'histoire est la science des causes et des effets" (*ib.*, iv., 57-63).

[3] [On p. 70 of vol. iv. he begins to consider "le paganisme, ce système riant mais absurde".]

[4] ["Gibbon, who was now [1779] sitting to Sir Joshua, seems to have taken the place formerly filled by Goldsmith, of his companion to places of amusement, masquerades, and ridottos" (Leslie and Taylor's *Reynolds*, ii., 273). See *John. Misc.*, ii., 237, for an imaginary *Dialogue between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Gibbon* drawn up by Reynolds).]

[5] ["He is defended by the like practice of other writers, who, being Dorians born, repudiated their vernacular idiom for that of the Athenians" (Bentley's *Works*, ed. 1836, i., 359). Bentley was reproached by one of his critics for all

have escaped some Anti-gallican clamour, had I been content with the more natural character of an English author.[1] I should have been more consistent had I rejected Mallet's advice, of prefixing an English dedication to a French book; a confusion of tongues that seemed to accuse the ignorance of my patron. The use of a foreign dialect might be excused by the hope of being employed as a negociator, by the desire of being generally understood on the continent; but my true motive was doubtless the ambition of new and singular fame, an Englishman claiming a place among the writers of France. The Latin tongue had been consecrated by the service of the church; it was refined by the imitation of the ancients; and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the scholars of Europe enjoyed the advantage, which they have gradually resigned, of conversing and writing in a common and learned idiom. As that idiom was no longer in any country the vulgar speech, they all stood on a level with each other; yet a citizen of old Rome might have smiled at the best Latinity of the Germans and Britons; and we may learn from the *Ciceronianus* of Erasmus, how difficult it was found to steer a middle course between pedantry and barbarism.[2] The Romans themselves had sometimes attempted a more perilous task, of writing in a living language, and appealing to the taste and judgment

three words. "The words in my book which he excepts against are *commentitious*, *repudiate*, *concede*, *aliene*, *vernacular*, *timid*, *negoce*, *putid* and *idiom*; every one of which were in print before I used them" (*ib.*, preface, p. 54).

"The histories of all our former wars are transmitted to us in our vernacular idiom, to use the phrase of a great modern critic" (Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 165).]

[1] [Maty wrote in his *Epistle*: "Avez-vous pu croire qu'on pardonnerait à un homme né pour assister aux assemblées tumultueuses du sénat, et à la destruction des renards de sa province, des discussions sur ce qu'on pensa, il y a deux mille ans, sur les divinités de la Grèce, et sur les premiers siècles de Rome? . . . Vos notes sont savantes, mais qui à Newmarket ou dans le café d'Arthur peut les lire? . . . J'ai gardé pour le dernier le plus grand de vos crimes. Vous êtes Anglais, et vous choisissez la langue de vos ennemis. Le vieux Caton frémit, et dans son *Club* Antigallican vous dénonce, le *punch* à la main, un ennemi de la patrie" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 7-9).]

[2] [Gibbon sums up an interesting criticism on the *Ciceronianus* by saying that "perhaps the natural conclusion from these various difficulties, where either freedom or correctness must be sacrificed, was, that, instead of that ungrateful labour upon a dead language, it would be better to improve and cultivate the living ones. But this conclusion was too much for the age of Erasmus" (*Misc. Works*, v., 262).]

of the natives. The vanity of Tully was doubly interested in the Greek memoirs of his own consulship ; and if he modestly supposes that some Latinisms might be detected in his style, he is confident of his own skill in the art of Isocrates and Aristotle ; and he requests his friend Atticus to disperse the copies of his work at Athens, and in the other cities of Greece (*Ad Atticum,* i., 19 ; ii., 1). But it must not be forgotten, that from infancy to manhood Cicero and his contemporaries had read and declaimed, and composed with equal diligence in both languages ; and that he was not allowed to frequent a Latin school till he had imbibed the lessons of the Greek grammarians and rhetoricians. In modern times, the language of France has been diffused by the merit of her writers, the social manners of the natives, the influence of the monarchy, and the exile of the Protestants.[1] Several foreigners have seized the opportunity of speaking to Europe in this common dialect, and Germany may plead the authority of Leibnitz and Frederick, of the first of her philosophers, and the greatest of her kings.[2] The just pride and laudable prejudice of England has restrained this communication of idioms ; and of all the nations on this side of the Alps, my countrymen are the least practised, and least perfect in the exercise of the French tongue. By Sir William Temple[3] and Lord Chester-

[1] [According to Voltaire (*Œuvres*, xviii., 320), in the three years that followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685-88) nearly fifty thousand Protestant families left France.]

[2] [Voltaire wrote in 1740 : " La langue française est devenue presque la langue universelle " (*ib.*, xlvii., 479). In his *Siècle de Louis XIV.* published in 1752, he says of Leibnitz : " C'était peut-être le savant le plus universel de l'Europe. . . . Jamais la correspondance entre les philosophes ne fut plus universelle ; Leibnitz servait à l'animer. On a vu une république littéraire établie insensiblement dans l'Europe malgré les guerres, et malgré les religions différentes. . . . Les véritables savants dans chaque genre ont resserré les liens de cette grande société des esprits répandue partout, et partout indépendante. Cette correspondance dure encore, elle est une des consolations des maux que l'ambition et la politique répandent sur la terre " (*ib.*, xviii., 278). For Gibbon's estimate of Leibnitz see *Misc. Works*, iii., 361, 386, 568. " He may be compared," Gibbon writes, " to those heroes whose empire has been lost in the ambition of universal conquest " (*ib.*, p. 563). In *The Decline* (vi., 444) he calls him " the great Leibnitz, a master of the history of the Middle Ages ".]

[3] [Swift, in editing Temple's Letters, writes : " I have made some literal amendments, especially in the Latin, French and Spanish " (Temple's *Works*, ed. 1757, i., 226). Temple went to France at the age of nineteen, and stayed there two years (*ib.*, preface, p. 9).]

field it was only used on occasions of civility and business,[1] and their printed letters will not be quoted as models of composition. Lord Bolingbroke may have published in French a sketch of his *Reflections on Exile*[2]; but his reputation now reposes on the address of Voltaire, "Docte sermones utriusque linguæ";[3] and by his English dedication to Queen Caroline,[4] and his *Essay on Epic Poetry*,[5] it should seem that Voltaire himself wished to deserve a return of the same compliment. The exception of Count Hamilton cannot fairly be urged; though an Irishman by birth, he was educated in France from his childhood. Yet I am surprised that a long residence in England, and the habits of domestic conversation, did not affect the ease and purity of his inimitable style; and I regret the omission of his English verses, which might have afforded an amusing object of comparison.[6] I might therefore assume the *primus ego in patriam*, etc.;[7] but with what success I have

[1] [Chesterfield sometimes wrote to his son in French as a mode of teaching him the language.]

[2] [The *Reflections upon Exile*, written in France in 1716, are included in their English form in Bolingbroke's *Works*, ed. 1809, i., 137. I find no mention of a French version of this essay.]

[3] [In the *Discours sur la Tragédie à Mylord Bolingbroke*, prefixed to *Brutus* (1730), Voltaire writes: "Souffrez donc que je vous présente *Brutus*, quoique écrit dans une autre langue, *docte sermonis* [*sic.*] *utriusque linguæ*, à vous qui me donneriez des leçons de français aussi-bien que d'anglais, à vous qui m'apprendriez du moins à rendre à ma langue cette force et cette énergie qu'inspire la noble liberté de penser; car les sentimens vigoureux de l'âme passent toujours dans le langage; et qui pense fortement, parle de même" (*Œuvres*, i., 309).

Voltaire applied to Bolingbroke Horace's address to Mæcenas, translated by Francis:—

"The Greek and Roman languages are thine" (*Odes*, iii., 8, 5).]

[4] [It was prefixed to the fourth edition of *La Henriade*, published in London in 1728. See *Œuvres de Voltaire*, viii., 14, where 1726 is given as the date of publication, a year before Caroline became queen.]

[5] [*Essai sur la Poésie Épique* (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, viii., 346). In a note it is stated: "Cet Essai avait d'abord été composé en anglais par l'auteur lorsqu'il était à Londres, en 1726; on le traduisit en français à Paris: . . . mais, depuis, l'auteur refondit cet ouvrage en l'écrivant en français". See also *ib.*, p. 424.]

[6] [*Ante*, p. 11, *n.* 1. "Ses *Mémoires du comte de Grammont*, son beau-frère, sont de tous les livres celui où le fonds le plus mince est paré du style le plus gai, le plus vif et le plus agréable. C'est le modèle d'une conversation enjouée, plus que le modèle d'un livre" (*ib.*, xvii., 97).

In the introduction to Sir Walter Scott's edition of the English version the English verses are given.]

[7] ["Primus ego in patriam mecum (modo vita supersit)
Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas."
(Virgil, *Georgica*, iii., 10.)
"I, first of Romans, shall in triumph come
From conquered Greece, and bring her trophies home."
(Dryden.)]

explored this untrodden path must be left to the decision of my French readers. Dr. Maty, who might himself be questioned as a foreigner, has secured his retreat at my expense. "Je ne crois pas que vous vous piquiez d'être moins facile à reconnaître pour un Anglois que Lucullus pour un Romain." My friends at Paris have been more indulgent, they received me as a countryman, or at least as a provincial; but they were friends and Parisians.[1] The defects which Maty insinuates, "Ces traits saillants, ces figures hardies, ce sacrifice de la règle au sentiment, et de la cadence à la force,"[2] are the faults of the youth, rather than of the stranger: and after the long and laborious exercise of my own language, I am conscious that my French style has been ripened and improved.

I have already hinted, that the publication of my essay was delayed till I had embraced the military profession. I shall now amuse myself with the recollection of an active scene, which bears no affinity to any other period of my studious and social life.

In the outset of a glorious war, the English people had been defended by the aid of German mercenaries.[3] A national

[1] The copious extracts which were given in the *Journal Etranger* by Mr. Suard, a judicious critic, must satisfy both the author and the public. I may here observe, that I have never seen in any literary review a tolerable account of my History. The manufacture of journals, at least on the continent, is miserably debased.—GIBBON.

[Gibbon wanted Suard to translate the *Decline* (*Misc. Works*, ii., 176). He had translated Robertson's *Charles V.* (Stewart's *Robertson*, p. 218), and Hume's *Concise Account of the Dispute between Mr. Hume and Mr. Rousseau* (Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, pp. 92-93).

"The first time Suard saw Burke, who was at Reynolds's, Johnson touched him on the shoulder and said, 'Le grand Burke'" (*Boswelliana*, p. 299). When in 1774 Suard was admitted into the French Academy, Voltaire wrote to him: "Je vais relire votre Discours pour la quatrième fois" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, lvi., 387).

"Sallo (*Denis de*), né en 1626 . . . inventeur des journaux. Bayle perfectionna ce genre, déshonoré ensuite par quelques journaux que publièrent à l'envi des libraires avides, et que des écrivains obscurs remplirent d'extraits infidèles, d'inepties et de mensonges. Enfin on est parvenu jusqu'à faire un trafic public d'éloges et de censures, surtout dans des feuilles périodiques; et la littérature a éprouvé le plus grand avilissement par ces infâmes manéges" (*ib.*, xvii., 161).]

[2] [*Misc. Works*, iv., 13. See *ante*, p. 129, *n.*]

[3] [On March 23, 1756, the King informed Parliament, that, as France threatened an invasion, he had sent for a body of Hessian troops. Both Houses addressed him to send in addition for twelve battalions of his Electoral troops with artillery (*Parl. Hist.*, xv., 700-3). "As the fears of an invasion

militia has been the cry of every patriot since the Revolution [1]; and this measure, both in parliament and in the field, was supported by the country gentlemen or Tories, who insensibly transferred their loyalty to the house of Hanover: in the language of Mr. Burke, they have changed the idol, but they have preserved the idolatry.[2] In the act of offering our names and receiving our commissions, as major and captain [3] in the Hampshire regiment (June 12, 1759), we had not supposed that we should be dragged away, my father from his farm, myself from my books, and condemned, during two years and a half (May 10, 1760 to December 23, 1762), to a wandering life of military servitude. But a weekly or monthly exercise of thirty thousand provincials would have left them useless and ridiculous; and after the pretence of an invasion had vanished, the popularity of Mr. Pitt gave a sanction to the illegal step of keeping them till the end of the war under arms, in constant pay and duty, and at a distance from their respective homes.[4] When the King's order for our embodying

subsided in the minds of the people, their antipathy to these foreign auxiliaries emerged. The ministry was execrated for having reduced the nation to such a low circumstance of disgrace as that they should owe their security to German mercenaries. Nothing would have restrained them from violent acts of outrage but the most orderly, modest and inoffensive behaviour by which both the Hanoverians and Hessians were distinguished" (Smollett's *England*, ed. 1800, iii., 495).]

[1] [See Appendix 23 and *ante*, p. 119, *n.*]

[2] [Gibbon says that he had heard Burke exclaim this in the House of Commons (*Auto.*, p. 182).]

[3] [Men of property only were qualified to act as officers. "The qualification of a major shall be £300, and of a captain £200 per annum, half of which shall be within the county for which they serve" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1762, p. 226).]

[4] ["They are not compellable to march out of their counties, unless in case of invasion or actual rebellion" (Blackstone's *Commentaries*, ed. 1775, i., 412). On May 30, 1759, Pitt communicated a message to the Commons from the King, "in which, in pursuance of the late Act, His Majesty acquainted the House of the imminent danger of an invasion being attempted; to the end that His Majesty may cause the militia to march as occasion shall require". The Commons replied: "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to give directions to his Lieutenants of the several counties to use their utmost diligence to carry into execution the several Acts of Parliament made for the better ordering the militia forces" (*Parl. Hist.*, xv., 940). "The threats of an invasion," wrote Burke, "in a great measure executed the Militia Act, which hardly anything else could have put in execution. . . . Such is the effect when power and patriotism unite; when *liberty and order kiss;* and when a nation sits with a happy security under the shade of

came down, it was too late to retreat, and too soon to repent. The south battalion of the Hampshire militia was a small independent corps of four hundred and seventy-six, officers and men, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Worsley,[1] who, after a prolix and passionate contest, delivered us from the tyranny of the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bolton.[2] My proper station, as first captain, was at the head of my own, and afterwards of the grenadier, company[3]; but in the absence, or even in the presence, of the two field officers, I was entrusted by my friend and my father with the effective labour of dictating the orders, and exercising the battalion. With the help of an original journal, I could write the history of my bloodless and inglorious campaigns; but as these events have lost much of their importance in my own eyes, they shall be dispatched in a few words. From Winchester, the first place of assembly (June 4, 1760), we were removed, at our own request, for the benefit of a foreign education. By the arbitrary, and often capricious, orders of the War-office, the battalion successively marched to the pleasant and hospitable Blandford (June 17); to Hilsea barracks, a seat of disease

abilities which she has tried, and virtues in which she dares to confide" (*Annual Register*, 1759, i., 7).

The resolution of the House, whatever effect it had at the time—and it seems to be drawn up ambiguously—must have lost its power when, less than six months later, by Hawke's victory over the French fleet (Nov. 20, 1759) "the long threatened invasion was dissipated" (*ib.*, i., 53).]

[1] [Gibbon has the following entries in his journal: "Aug. 28, 1762. To-day Sir Thomas came to us to dinner. The Spa has done him a great deal of good, for he looks another man. Pleased to see him, we kept bumperizing till after roll-calling; Sir Thomas assuring us, every fresh bottle, how infinitely soberer he was grown. 29th. I felt the usual consequence of Sir Thomas's company, and lost a morning because I lost the day before" (*Post*, Appendix 23. See also *Auto.*, p. 189).

A militiaman who appeared drunk "at the time of exercise" had "to forfeit ten shillings, or sit an hour in the stocks" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1757, p. 303).]

[2] [For his "tyranny" see *Auto.*, p. 183. "July 12, 1765. The Duke of Bolton, the other morning—nobody knows why or wherefore, except that there is a good deal of madness in the blood, sat himself down upon the floor in his dressing-room, and shot himself through the head" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 385). See also *ante*, p. 119, *n.*]

[3] [See Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 373, for "An Account of a Week's pay Due to Captain Gibbon's Company of Militia". The pay of a private was 3s. 5d. a week; of a sergeant 6s. 10d.]

and discord[1] (September 1); to Cranbrook in the weald of Kent (December 11); to the sea-coast of Dover (December 27); to Winchester camp (June 25, 1761); to the populous and disorderly town of the Devizes (October 23); to Salisbury (February 28, 1762); to our beloved Blandford a second time (March 9); and finally, to the fashionable resort of Southampton (June 2); where the colours were fixed till our final dissolution (December 23). On the beach at Dover we had exercised in sight of the Gallic shores. But the most splendid and useful scene of our life was a four months' encampment on Winchester Down, under the command of the Earl of Effingham.[2] Our army consisted of the thirty-fourth regiment of foot and six militia corps. The consciousness of our defects was stimulated by friendly emulation. We improved our time and opportunities in morning and evening field-days; and in the general reviews the South Hampshire were rather a credit than a disgrace to the line. In our subsequent quarters of the Devizes and Blandford, we advanced with a quick step in our military studies; the ballot of the ensuing summer renewed our vigour and youth; and had the militia subsisted another year, we might have contested the prize with the most perfect of our brethren.

[1] [These barracks were "within the Portsmouth lines, a square of low, ill-built huts, where," says Gibbon, "we lost many men by fevers and the small-pox" (*Auto.*, p. 185). Dr. Brocklesby, the physician of Johnson and Burke (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 173, 338, 399), described the barracks in 1763: "The ceilings are low, and ventilators are wanting. They are worse than any ship kept tolerably clean, as the country adjacent is overflowed twice a day. The small-pox apartments are rooms little more than six feet high, with windows that cannot be opened; and in these no less than sixteen loathsome bodies were often crowded. These barracks swept off the men like a perpetual pestilence. The windows are not suffered to be open, with a view to keep the men warm, and yet save the expense of fire." "The straw," he adds, "on which men lie in their tents should be aired, and turned three times a week."]

[2] [Horace Walpole, writing just after the coronation of George III., said that the King complained that "the Heralds were ignorant of their office. Lord Effingham, the Earl Marshal, told him he had taken such care of registering directions, that *next coronation* would be conducted with the greatest order imaginable. The King was so diverted with this *flattering* speech that he made the Earl repeat it several times" (Walpole's *Letters*, iii., 445). For a review by his Lordship see *post*, Appendix 24; for his incapacity—"our drowsy general" Gibbon called him—see *Auto.*, p. 186.]

The loss of so many busy and idle hours was not compensated by any elegant pleasure; and my temper was insensibly soured by the society of our rustic officers.[1] In every state there exists, however, a balance of good and evil. The habits of a sedentary life were usefully broken by the duties of an active profession: in the healthful exercise of the field I hunted with a battalion, instead of a pack; and at that time I was ready, at any hour of the day or night, to fly from quarters to London, from London to quarters, on the slightest call of private or regimental business. But my principal obligation to the militia was the making me an Englishman, and a soldier. After my foreign education, with my reserved temper, I should long have continued a stranger in my native country, had I not been shaken in this various scene of new faces and new friends: had not experience forced me to feel the characters of our leading men, the state of parties, the forms of office, and the operation of our civil and military system. In this peaceful service I imbibed the rudiments of the language, and science of tactics, which opened a new field of study and observation. I diligently read, and meditated the *Mémoires Militaires* of Quintus Icilius (Mr. Guichardt), the only writer who has united the merits of a professor and a veteran. The discipline and evolutions of a modern battalion gave me a clearer notion of the phalanx and the legion; and the captain of the Hampshire grenadiers (the reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman empire.[2]

[1] [*Post*, p. 168; and *Auto.*, p. 189.]

[2] [Gibbon, recording in his journal his study of these *Mémoires*, continues: "Indeed, my own military knowledge was of some service to me, as I am well acquainted with the modern discipline and exercise of a battalion. So that though much inferior to M. Folard and M. Guichardt, who had seen service, I am a much better judge than Salmasius, Casaubon, or Lipsius, mere scholars who perhaps had never seen a battalion under arms" (*Misc. Works*, v., 222). "Guichardt's Analysis of the two Campaigns in Spain and Africa is the noblest monument that has ever been raised to the fame of Cæsar" (*The Decline*, ii., 524). "Alas! Quintus Icilius is no more" (*ib.*, vi., 65).

Carlyle tells how Captain Guichard (not Guichardt) got his names Quintus Icilius and his promotion given him by Frederick the Great. "One night the topic happened to be Pharsalia, and the excellent conduct of a certain centurion of the Tenth Legion. . . . 'A dexterous man, that Quintus Icilius the

A youth of any spirit is fired even by the play of arms, and in the first sallies of my enthusiasm I had seriously attempted to embrace the regular profession of a soldier.[1] But this military fever was cooled by the enjoyment of our mimic Bellona, who soon unveiled to my eyes her naked deformity. How often did I sigh for my proper station in society and letters. How often (a proud comparison) did I repeat the complaint of Cicero in the command of a provincial army: "Clitellæ bovi sunt impositæ. Est incredibile quam me negotii tædeat. Non habet satis magnum campum ille tibi non ignotus cursus animi; et industriæ meæ præclara opera cessat. Lucem, *libros*, urbem, domum, vos desidero. Sed feram, ut potero; sit modo annuum. Si prorogatur, actum est.[2]" From a service without danger I might indeed have retired without disgrace; but as often as I hinted a wish of resigning, my fetters were riveted by the friendly intreaties of the colonel, the parental authority of the major, and my own regard for the honour and welfare of the battalion. When I felt that my personal escape was impracticable, I bowed my neck to the yoke: my servitude was protracted far beyond the

Centurion!' observed Frederick. 'Ah, yes; but excuse me, your Majesty, his name was Quintus Cæcilius,' said Guichard. 'No, it was Icilius,' said the King, positive to his opinion on that small point. . . . Next day, Guichard came with the book" (what "Book" nobody would ever yet tell me), "and putting his finger on the passage, 'See, your Majesty: Quintus Cæcilius!' extinguished his royal opponent. 'Hm,' answered Frederick: 'so?—Well, you shall be Quintus Icilius, at any rate!' And straightway had him entered in the Army Books as 'Major Quintus Icilius'" (*Frederick the Great*, 10 vol., ed. n.d., viii., 114). Carlyle describes "his new book on the Art Military of the Ancients" as "a solid account of that matter, by the first man who ever understood both war and Greek" (*ib.*, p. 2).]

[1] [*Post*, end of Appendix 23. Gibbon's service in the militia seems to have left a stain on his character, when we find him writing of soldiers being "degraded by the industry of mechanic trades" (*The Decline*, ii., 177).]

[2] [*Epistolæ ad Atticum*, v., 15. Gibbon italicised "*libros*," as an indication that he had changed the word. In the original it is "forum". He has changed moreover the order of the sentence. The first four words come later on in the letter than the rest of the quotation. The following is W. Heberden's translation of the passage as Cicero wrote it: "It is not to be believed how sick I am of this business. The activity of my mind, with which you are so well acquainted has not a sufficient field to exert itself; and the notable effect of my industry is lost. . . . I want the splendour, the forum, the city, my own home, and you. But I will bear it as I can, provided it be but for one year. . . . The paniers, as they say, have been put on the wrong beast" (Cicero's *Letters*, 1825, i., 289).]

annual patience of Cicero; and it was not till after the preliminaries of peace[1] that I received my discharge, from the act of government which disembodied the militia.[2]

When I complain of the loss of time, justice to myself and to the militia must throw the greatest part of that reproach on the first seven or eight months, while I was obliged to learn as well as to teach. The dissipation of Blandford, and the disputes of Portsmouth, consumed the hours which were not employed in the field; and amid the perpetual hurry of an inn, a barrack, or a guard-room, all literary ideas were banished from my mind. After this long fast, the longest which I have ever known, I once more tasted at Dover the pleasures of reading and thinking; and the hungry appetite with which I opened a volume of Tully's philosophical works is still present to my memory.[3] The last review of my Essay before its publication, had prompted me to investigate the *nature of the gods;* my inquiries led me to the Histoire Critique du Manichéisme of Beausobre, who discusses many deep questions of Pagan and Christian theology[4]: and from this rich treasury of facts and opinions, I deduced my own consequences, beyond the holy circle of the author. After this recovery I never relapsed into indolence; and my example might prove, that in the life most averse to study, some hours may be stolen, some minutes may be snatched. Amidst the tumult of Winchester camp I sometimes thought and read in my tent; in the more settled

[1] [The preliminaries were signed on Nov. 3, 1762 (*Annual Register*, 1762, i., 54).]

[2] [See Appendix 24 for Gibbon's journal.]

[3] ["I lost some time," he wrote, "before I could recover my habit of application" (*post*, Appendix 23, under date of Jan. 11, 1761).]

[4] ["The learned historian [Beausobre] spins with incomparable art the systematic thread of opinion, and transforms himself by turns into the person of a saint, a sage, or an heretic. Yet his refinement is sometimes excessive; he betrays an amiable partiality in favour of the weaker side, and, while he guards against calumny, he does not allow sufficient scope for superstition and fanaticism" (*The Decline*, v., 97).

On his death in 1738, Frederick the Great wrote to Voltaire: "Nous venons de perdre ici un des plus grands hommes d'Allemagne. C'est le fameux M. de Beausobre . . . ennemi implacable des jésuites, la meilleure plume de Berlin . . . d'ailleurs sentant quelque faible pour la superstition" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, lix., 256).]

quarters of the Devizes, Blandford, and Southampton, I always secured a separate lodging, and the necessary books; and in the summer of 1762, while the new militia was raising,[1] I enjoyed at Buriton two or three months of literary repose. In forming a new plan of study, I hesitated between the mathematics and the Greek language; both of which I had neglected since my return from Lausanne. I consulted a learned and friendly mathematician, Mr. George Scott, a pupil of de Moivre[2]; and his map of a country which I have never explored, may perhaps be more serviceable to others.[3] As soon as I had given the preference to Greek, the example of Scaliger and my own reason determined me on the choice of Homer, the father of poetry, and the Bible of the ancients: but Scaliger ran through the Iliad in one and twenty days;[4] and I was not dissatisfied with my own diligence for performing the same labour in an equal number of weeks. After the first difficulties were surmounted, the language of nature and harmony[5] soon became easy and familiar, and each day I sailed upon the ocean with a brisker gale and a more steady course.

[1] [The militia served for three years (*Gent. Mag.*, 1757, p. 302). They had been raised in the summer of 1759 (*ante*, p. 135).]

[2] ["De Moivre, on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, settled in England. He revolutionised higher trigonometry by the discovery of the theorem known by his name. . . . His work on the theory of probability surpasses anything done by any other mathematician except Laplace" (Cajori's *Hist. of Math.*, 1894, p. 245).]

[3] [See *Misc. Works*, ii., 44. Scott was a Commissioner of Excise. He had been sub-preceptor to the Prince of Wales (George III.), on Bolingbroke's recommendation. For his clapping Johnson on the back see Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 117, and *John. Misc.*, i., 180).]

[4] [Pattison (*Essays*, i., 137) describes how Joseph Scaliger, at the age of eighteen, began the study of Greek by enrolling himself in the class of the most renowned Greek scholar in Europe. "A trial of two months opened his eyes, and he understood that to begin one must begin at the beginning. He resolved to shut himself up in his chamber, and become his own teacher. With the aid of a Latin translation he went through Homer in one and twenty days." Pattison adds (p. 198) that Scaliger does not say whether by Homer he means both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. For Gibbon's reasons for beginning with Homer see *Misc. Works*, v., 243.]

[5] [In *The Decline*, vii., 114, he describes Greek as "a musical and prolific language, that gives a soul to the objects of sense, and a body to the abstractions of philosophy".]

Ἐν δ' ἄνεμος πρῆσεν μέσον ἱστίον, ἀμφὶ δὲ κῦμα
Στείρῃ πορφύρεον μεγάλ' ἴαχε, νηὸς ἰούσης·
Ἡ δ' ἔθεεν κατὰ κῦμα διαπρήσσουσα κέλευθα.[1]

In the study of a poet who has since become the most intimate of my friends, I successively applied many passages and fragments of Greek writers; and among these I shall notice a life of Homer, in the Opuscula Mythologica of Gale,[2] several books of the geography of Strabo,[3] and the entire treatise of Longinus, which, from the title and the style, is equally worthy of the epithet of *sublime*.[4] My grammatical skill was improved, my vocabulary was enlarged; and in the militia I acquired a just and indelible knowledge of the first of languages. On every march, in every journey, Horace was always in my pocket, and often in my hand: but I should not mention his two critical epistles, the amusement of a morning, had they not been accompanied by the elaborate commentary of Dr. Hurd, now Bishop of Worcester.[5] On the interesting

[1] [*Iliad*, i., 481.]

" —— Fair wind, and blowing fresh,
Apollo sent them; quick they rear'd the mast,
Then spread th' unsullied canvas to the gale,
And the wind fill'd it. Roar'd the sable flood
Around the bark, that ever as she went
Dash'd wide the brine, and scudded swift away."

(Cowper's *Homer*.)—SHEFFIELD.

[2] [Thomas Gale. Evelyn recorded on Jan. 29, 1683: "Supped at Sir Joseph Williamson's, where was a select company of our Society [the Royal Society], Sir William Petty, Dr. Gale (that learned schoolmaster of St. Paul's), etc. The conversation was philosophical and cheerful, on divers considerable questions proposed; as of the hereditary succession of the Roman Emperors" (Evelyn's *Diary*, ii., 180). Gale was made Dean of York. See Pepys's *Diary*, ed. 1851, v., 423, for an amusing anecdote about his ghost.]

[3] [Gibbon recorded on Dec. 31, 1763: "I have always been an admirer of Strabo's good sense and variety of knowledge. Antiquity has left us more brilliant performances than his; but I know of none more solid and more useful" (*Misc. Works*, v., 445).]

[4] [See *ib.*, v., 252-55, 262-69, 273-77, for Gibbon's study and criticism of Longinus in 1762. On Oct. 3 he recorded: "Till now I was acquainted only with two ways of criticising a beautiful passage: the one, to show by an exact anatomy of it the distinct beauties of it, and whence they sprung; the other, an idle exclamation, or a general encomium, which leaves nothing behind it. Longinus has shown me that there is a third. He tells me his own feelings upon reading it; and tells them with such energy that he communicates them" (*ib.*, p. 263). See also *The Decline*, i., 58, 309.]

[5] [*Horatii Flacci Epistolæ ad Pisones et Augustum; with an English Commentary and Notes.* Second edition. Cambridge, 1757. Gibbon wrote of

subjects of composition and imitation of epic and dramatic poetry, I presumed to think for myself; and thirty close-written pages in folio could scarcely comprise my full and free discussion of the sense of the master and the pedantry of the servant.

After his oracle Dr. Johnson,[1] my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds denies all original genius, any natural propensity of the mind to one art or science rather than another.[2] Without engaging in a metaphysical or rather verbal dispute, I *know*, by experience, that from my early youth I aspired to the character of an historian.[3] While I served in the militia, before and after the publication of my essay, this idea ripened in my mind; nor can I paint in more lively colours the feelings of the moment, than by transcribing some passages, under their respective dates, from a journal which I kept at that time.

Buriton, April 14, 1761.

(In a short excursion from Dover.)

"Having thought of several subjects for an historical composition, I chose the expedition of Charles VIII. of France into Italy.[4] I read two memoirs of Mr. de Foncemagne[5] in the Academy of Inscriptions (tom. xvii., pp. 539—607), and

Hurd: "I know few writers more deserving of the great, though prostituted, name of critic; but, like many critics, he is better qualified to instruct than to execute. His manner appears to me harsh and affected, and his style clouded with obscure metaphors, and needlessly preplexed with expressions exotic or technical. . . . His discourse upon the several provinces of the drama is a truly critical performance; I may even say, a truly philosophical one" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 113, 134). See *post*, pp. 146, 178.

Boswell wrote a long note on one of Hurd's Notes (*Life of Johnson*, iii., 74).]

[1] ["We are both of Dr. Johnson's school," Reynolds wrote to a friend. "He may be said to have formed my mind, and to have brushed from it a great deal of dust" (*John. Misc.*, ii., 227; Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 245).]

[2] [See Appendix 25.]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 43. Gibbon was an exception to Johnson's rule. "Never ask a baby of seven years old," he said, "which way his genius leads him, when we all know that a boy of seven years old has no genius for anything except a peg-top and an apple-pie" (*John. Misc.*, i., 314).]

[4] ["I meditate," Gibbon wrote, "a history of the expedition of Charles VIII. into Italy; an event which changed the face of Europe" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 206). "In five months Charles VIII. traversed affrighted Italy as a conqueror, gave laws to the Florentines and the Pope, was acknowledged King of Naples, and assumed the title of Emperor of the East" (*ib.*, p. 51).]

[5] [*Post*, p. 153.]

abstracted them. I likewise finished this day a dissertation, in which I examine the right of Charles VIII. to the crown of Naples, and the rival claims of the House of Anjou and Arragon: it consists of ten folio pages, besides large notes." [1]

Buriton, August 4, 1761.

(In a week's excursion from Winchester camp.)

"After having long revolved subjects for my intended historical essay, I renounced my first thought of the expedition of Charles VIII. as too remote from us, and rather an introduction to great events, than great and important in itself. I successively chose and rejected the crusade of Richard the First, the barons' wars against John and Henry III., the History of Edward the Black Prince, the lives and comparisons of Henry V. and the Emperor Titus, the life of Sir Philip Sidney, or that of the Marquis of Montrose. At length I have fixed on Sir Walter Raleigh for my hero. His eventful story is varied by the characters of the soldier and sailor, the courtier and historian; and it may afford such a fund of materials as I desire, which have not yet been properly manufactured. At present I cannot attempt the execution of this work. Free leisure, and the opportunity of consulting many books, both printed and manuscript, are as necessary as they are impossible to be attained in my present way of life. However, to acquire a general insight into my subject and resources, I read the life of Sir Walter Raleigh by Dr. Birch,[2] his copious article in the *General Dictionary* by the same hand, and the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James the First in Hume's *History of England*."

Buriton, January 1762.

(In a month's absence from the Devizes.)

"During this interval of repose, I again turned my thoughts to Sir Walter Raleigh, and looked more closely into my materials. I read the two volumes in quarto of the *Bacon Papers*, published by Dr. Birch; the *Fragmenta Regalia* of Sir Robert

[1] [*Misc. Works*, iii., 206.]

[2] [See Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 226, for Johnson's letter to Birch about an autograph manuscript of Raleigh's.]

Naunton, Mallet's *Life of Lord Bacon*,[1] and the political treatises of that great man in the first volume of his works, with many of his letters in the second; Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts*, and the elaborate *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh*, which Mr. Oldys has prefixed to the best edition of his *History of the World*.[2] My subject opens upon me, and in general improves upon a nearer prospect."

Buriton, July 26, 1762.

(During my summer residence.)

"I am afraid of being reduced to drop my hero; but my time has not, however, been lost in the research of his story, and of a memorable æra of our English annals. The *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh*, by Oldys, is a very poor performance; a servile panegyric, or flat apology, tediously minute, and composed in a dull and affected style. Yet the author was a man of diligence and learning, who had read everything relative to his subject, and whose ample collections are arranged with perspicuity and method. Excepting some anecdotes lately revealed in the *Sidney and Bacon Papers*,[3] I know not what I should be able to add. My ambition (exclusive of the uncertain merit of style and sentiment) must be confined to the hope of giving a good abridgment of Oldys.[4] I have even the disappointment of finding some parts of this copious work very dry and barren; and these parts are unluckily some of the most characteristic: Raleigh's colony of Virginia, his quarrels with Essex, the true secret of his conspiracy, and,

[1] [*Ante*, p. 82, *n.* 1.]

[2] [Published in 1736 in 2 vols., folio.]

[3] ["*Letters and Memorials of State, wrote and collected by the Sydneys, etc.*; published by Arthur Collins Esq.; 2 vols." (*Gent. Mag.*, 1746, p. 276).

"*Letters, Speeches, Charges, etc., of Lord Chancellor Bacon*; published by T. Birch, D.D." (*ib.*, 1762, p. 602).]

[4] [A list of Oldys's writings is given in the *Gent. Mag.*, 1784, pp. 161, 272. "He was thrown into the Fleet prison for debt. . . . After his release, such was his affection for the place he left that he constantly spent his evenings in it. He was an excellent picker-up of facts and materials; but had so little the power of arranging them, or connecting them by intermediate ideas, that he was obliged to discontinue his labours in the *Biographia Britannica*, and, I have been told, proceeded no further than the letter A" (*ib.*, p. 260; see also Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 175).]

above all, the detail of his private life, the most essential and important to a biographer. My best resource would be in the circumjacent history of the times, and perhaps in some digressions artfully introduced, like the fortunes of the Peripatetic philosophy in the portrait of Lord Bacon. But the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First are the period of English history which has been the most variously illustrated: and what new lights could I reflect on a subject which has exercised the accurate industry of *Birch*,[1] the lively and curious acuteness of *Walpole*,[2] the critical spirit of *Hurd*,[3] the vigorous sense of *Mallet* and *Robertson*, and the impartial philosophy of *Hume*? Could I even surmount these obstacles, I should shrink with terror from the modern history of England, where every character is a problem, and every reader a friend or an enemy; where a writer is supposed to hoist a flag of party, and is devoted to damnation by the adverse faction. Such would be *my* reception at home: and abroad, the historian of Raleigh must encounter an indifference far more bitter than censure or reproach. The events of his life are interesting; but his character is ambiguous, his actions are obscure, his writings are English, and his fame is confined to the narrow limits of our language and our island. I must embrace a safer and more extensive theme.

[1] [Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 160, *n.*]

[2] [Horace Walpole published in 1758 his *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors.*

Gibbon, reviewing in 1768 in the *Mémoires Britanniques* his *Historic Doubts on Richard III.*, says: "Avant lui l'histoire littéraire, abandonnée aux manœuvres de la littérature, n'avait présenté que des nomenclatures sèches, ou des recherches minutieuses et puériles. La noblesse savante de M. Walpole a amusé les gens du monde, et a mérité l'attention des philosophes" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 331). In some notes, to which Lord Sheffield assigns the date of 1768 or 1769, Gibbon describes Walpole as "that ingenious trifler," and goes on to criticise "a very puerile reflexion" of his (*ib.*, v., 571).]

[3] [Gibbon refers to Hurd's *Moral and Political Dialogues* (1759), which are described by Boswell as having "a woefully Whiggish cast" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 190). It was "*these*," said George III., "that made Hurd a Bishop" (Parr's *Works*, i., 312, 323). Parr was told by Porson that "many notable discoveries might be made by comparing the *variæ lectiones*, the clippings and the filings, the softenings and the varnishings of sundry constitutional doctrines, as they crept by little and little into the different successive editions" (*ib.*, iii., 369).]

"There is one which I should prefer to all others, *The History of the Liberty of the Swiss*,[1] of that independence which a brave people rescued from the House of Austria, defended against a Dauphin of France, and finally sealed with the blood of Charles of Burgundy. From such a theme, so full of public spirit, of military glory, of examples of virtue, of lessons of government, the dullest stranger would catch fire; what might not *I* hope, whose talents, whatsoever they may be, would be inflamed with the zeal of patriotism. But the materials of this history are inaccessible to me, fast locked in the obscurity of an old barbarous German dialect, of which I am totally ignorant,[2] and which I cannot resolve to learn for this sole and peculiar purpose.

"I have another subject in view, which is the contrast of the former history: the one a poor, warlike, virtuous republic, which emerges into glory and freedom; the other a commonwealth, soft, opulent, and corrupt; which, by just degrees, is precipitated from the abuse to the loss of her liberty: both lessons are, perhaps, equally instructive. This second subject is, *The History of the Republic of Florence under the House of Medicis:* a period of one hundred and fifty years, which rises or descends from the dregs of the Florentine democracy, to the title and dominion of Cosmo de Medicis in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. I might deduce a chain of revolutions not unworthy of the pen of Vertot[3]; singular men, and singular events; the Medicis four times expelled, and as often recalled; and the Genius of Freedom reluctantly yielding to the arms of Charles V. and the policy of Cosmo. The character and fate of Savanarola, and the revival of arts and letters in Italy, will be essentially connected with the elevation of the family and the fall of the republic. The Medicis stirps quasi fataliter nata ad instauranda vel fovenda studia (Lipsius ad Germanos et Gallos, Epist. viii.) were illustrated by the patronage of learning; and enthusiasm[4] was the

[1] [*Post*, p. 171.]
[2] [Gibbon never learnt German (*post*, p. 233).]
[3] [*Ante*, p. 90.]
[4] [*Ib.*, p. 22, *n.*]

most formidable weapon of their adversaries. On this splendid subject I shall most probably fix; but *when*, or *where*, or *how* will it be executed? I behold in a dark and doubtful perspective."

Res altâ terrâ, et caligine mersas.[1]

The youthful habits of the language and manners of France had left in my mind an ardent desire of revisiting the Continent on a larger and more liberal plan. According to the law of custom, and perhaps of reason, foreign travel completes the education of an English gentleman[2]: my father had consented to my wish, but I was detained above four years by my rash engagement in the militia. I eagerly grasped the first moments of freedom: three or four weeks in Hampshire and London were employed in the preparations of my journey, and the farewell visits of friendship and civility: my last act in town was to applaud Mallet's new tragedy of Elvira[3]; a post-chaise conveyed me to Dover, the packet to Boulogne, and such was my diligence, that I reached Paris[4] on the 28th of January, 1763, only thirty-six days after the disbanding of the militia. Two or three years were loosely defined for the term of my absence; and I was left at liberty to spend that time in such places and in such a manner as was most agreeable to my taste and judgment.[5]

In this first visit I passed three months and a half (January 28—May 9), and a much longer space might have been agreeably filled, without any intercourse with the natives. At home we are content to move in the daily round of pleasure

[1] [Virgil, *Æneid*, vi., 267.]

[2] [*Post*, p. 167.]

[3] [See Appendix 26.]

[4] [Horace Walpole, travelling the same journey in 1765, wrote: "From Boulogne to Paris it will cost me near ten guineas; but then consider, I travel alone, and carry Louis most part of the way in the chaise with me. *Nous autres milords Anglais* are not often so frugal" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 402). Gibbon also travelled alone in a post-chaise (*Corres.*, i., 27).]

[5] [In addition to the annuity which he enjoyed of £300, £1,200 was allowed by his father for "the extraordinaries of his travels" (*Auto.*, pp. 155, 156). "Whilst I was abroad," he wrote, "I spent about £700 a year, a sum, which with the unavoidable expences of travelling, barely supports the appearance of an English gentleman" (*Corres.*, i., 136).]

and business; and a scene which is always present is supposed to be within our knowledge, or at least within our power. But in a foreign country, curiosity is our business and our pleasure; and the traveller, conscious of his ignorance, and covetous of his time, is diligent in the search and the view of every object that can deserve his attention. I devoted many hours of the morning to the circuit of Paris and the neighbourhood, to the visit of churches and palaces conspicuous by their architecture, to the royal manufactures, collections of books and pictures, and all the various treasures of art, of learning, and of luxury.[1] An Englishman may hear without reluctance, that in these curious and costly articles Paris is superior to London; since the opulence of the French capital arises from the defects of its government and religion. In the absence of Louis XIV. and his successors, the Louvre has been left unfinished: but the millions which have been lavished on the sands of Versailles, and the morass of Marli, could not be supplied by the legal allowance of a British king.[2] The

[1] [Horace Walpole wrote from Paris to Gray on Nov. 19, 1765 (*Letters*, iv., 435): "The charms of Paris have not the least attraction for me, nor would keep me an hour on their own account. For the city itself, I cannot conceive where my eyes were; it is the ugliest, beastliest town in the universe."]

[2] [Versailles and Marli, wrote Gibbon, "have been cemented with the blood of the people" (*Auto.*, p. 263). Voltaire (*Œuvres*, xxv., 311) says of Versailles: "Il [Louis XIV] dépensa à ce palais et aux jardins plus de cinq cents millions, qui en font plus de neuf cents de notre espèce actuelle [£36,000,000]. M. le Duc de Créqui lui disait: 'Sire, vous avez beau faire, vous n'en ferez jamais qu'un favori sans mérite.'" Adam Smith points out the harm that was done in another way by Versailles. He instances it as one of those towns, "supported by the constant or occasional residence of a Court, in which the inferior ranks of people being chiefly maintained by the spending of revenue, are in general idle, dissolute, and poor" (*Wealth of Nations*, ed. 1811, ii., 91). Gibbon wrote in 1776 of Louis's expenditure on his army and navy: "France still feels that extraordinary effort" (*The Decline*, i., 18).

I have seen a copy of *The Guardian* in which Mrs. Piozzi recorded on the margin of No. 101: "Poor lost Versailles! Its misfortunes have been prettily celebrated in a popular street ballad of August, 1794, when there was much talk of an invasion from France:—

"'No British palace e'er was built
With poor men's blood or tears, Sir,
Like proud Versailles pollute with guilt,
Which found a lot severe, Sir.
Then let them shun our happy shore,
Or back again we'll bang 'em;
And of their Tree of Liberty
A gallows make to hang them.'"]

splendour of the French nobles is confined to their town residence; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats; and we should be astonished at our own riches, if the labours of architecture, the spoils of Italy and Greece, which are now scattered from Inverary[1] to Wilton,[2] were accumulated in a few streets between Marybone and Westminster. All superfluous ornament is rejected by the cold frugality of the protestants; but the catholic superstition, which is always the enemy of reason, is often the parent of the arts. The wealthy communities of priests and monks expend their revenues in stately edifices; and the parish church of St. Sulpice, one of the noblest structures in Paris, was built and adorned by the private industry of a late curé.[3] In this outset, and still more in the sequel of my tour, my eye was amused; but the pleasing vision cannot be fixed by the pen; the particular images are darkly seen through the medium of five-and-twenty years, and the narrative of my life must not degenerate into a book of travels.

But the principal end of my journey was to enjoy the society of a polished and amiable people, in whose favour I was strongly prejudiced,[4] and to converse with some authors,

[1] [The seat of the Dukes of Argyle. "What I admire here," said Johnson, "is the total defiance of all expence" (Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 355).]

[2] [The seat of the Earls of Pembroke. "Versailles," wrote Adam Smith, "is an ornament and an honour to France, Stowe and Wilton to England" (*Wealth of Nations*, ii., 109).]

[3] [Voltaire said in an article entitled *Des Embellissemens de Paris* (1749): "A qui appartient-il d'embellir la ville, sinon aux habitans qui jouissent dans son sein de tout ce que l'opulence et les plaisirs peuvent prodiguer aux hommes? . . . Je ne demande autre chose, sinon qu'on veuille avec fermeté. . . . Le célèbre curé de Saint-Sulpice voulut, et il bâtit, sans aucun fonds, un vaste édifice" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xxvi., 162, 170). The curé, who died in 1750, was J. B. Languet de Gergy (*ib., n.*).

Gibbon recorded in his journal on Feb. 21, 1763: "Nous jetâmes ensuite un coup-d'œil sur l'église de Saint-Sulpice, dont la façade (le prétexte et le fruit de tant de lotteries) n'est point encore achevée" (*Misc. Works*, i., 160).]

In *The Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 25, 1793, under date of Paris, Nov. 11, it is reported that "the Sections of Mutius Scævola and of the Red Cap brought twenty hand carriages full of the precious spoils of the Church of St. Sulpitius. 'That superb Temple,' said the Orator, 'whose gold, marble and brass reproach us with widows' and orphans' tears, shall be shut till the moment of its regeneration, when it shall be dedicated to Reason.' Honourable mention."]

[4] [In 1781 Gibbon described Lewis XVI. as "the absolute monarch of an industrious, wealthy and affectionate people" (*The Decline*, ii., 196). "If Julian," he wrote, "could now revisit the capital of France, he might converse

whose conversation, as I fondly imagined, must be far more pleasing and instructive than their writings. The moment was happily chosen. At the close of a successful war the British name was respected on the continent.

Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus.[1]

Our opinions, our fashions, even our games, were adopted in France, a ray of national glory illuminated each individual, and every Englishman was supposed to be born a patriot and a philosopher.[2] For myself, I carried a personal recommendation: my name and my Essay were already known; the compliment of having written in the French language entitled me to some returns of civility and gratitude. I was considered as a man of letters,[3] who wrote for amusement. Before my departure I had obtained from the Duke de Nivernois,[4] Lady Hervey,[5] the Mallets, Mr. Walpole, etc., many letters of recommendation to their private or literary friends. Of these epistles the reception and success were determined by the

with men of science and genius, capable of understanding and of instructing a disciple of the Greeks; he might excuse the lively and graceful follies of a nation, whose martial spirit has never been enervated by the indulgence of luxury; and he must applaud the perfection of that inestimable art which softens and refines and embellishes the intercourse of social life" (*ib.*, ii., 287). Eleven years later he described France as "that inhospitable land in which a people of slaves is suddenly become a nation of tyrants and cannibals. . . . Our only hope is now in their devouring one another; they are furious and hungry monsters" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 469, 474).]

[1] [*Lucan*, ix., 202. For Burke's fine application of these lines to Lord Chatham see E. J. Payne's *Burke*, i., 144.]

[2] [See Appendix 27.]

[3] [After "letters" follows in the original, "or rather as a gentleman" (*Auto.*, p. 200). See *ib.* for his boast how his dress, etc., distinguished him from other authors.]

[4] [Gibbon wrote of him: "A noble statesman, who has managed weighty and delicate negociations, ingeniously illustrates the political system of Clovis" (*The Decline*, iv., 102). To the Duke he was introduced by Maty. "He received me civilly, but (perhaps through Maty's fault) treated me more as a man of letters than as a man of fashion" (*Misc. Works*, i., 157). Gibbon, it seems, had something of the same feeling as Congreve, who "disgusted Voltaire by the despicable foppery of desiring to be considered not as an author, but a gentleman; to which the Frenchman replied, that if he had been only a gentleman, he should not have come to visit him" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 30).]

[5] [*Ante*, p. 115.]

character and situation of the persons by whom and to whom they were addressed: the seed was sometimes cast on a barren rock, and it sometimes multiplied an hundred fold in the production of new shoots, spreading branches, and exquisite fruit. But upon the whole, I had reason to praise the national urbanity, which from the court has diffused its gentle influence to the shop, the cottage, and the schools.[1] Of the men of genius of the age, Montesquieu and Fontenelle were no more; Voltaire resided on his own estate near Geneva; Rousseau in the preceding year had been driven from his hermitage of Montmorency;[2] and I blush at my having neglected to seek, in this journey, the acquaintance of Buffon.[3] Among the men of letters whom I saw, D'Alembert and Diderot held the foremost rank in merit, or at least in fame. I shall content myself with enumerating the well-known names of the Count de Caylus,[4] of the Abbé de la Bléterie, Barthélemy, Raynal, Arnaud, of Messieurs de la Condamine, du Clos, de S^te^ Palaye, de Bougainville, Caperonnier, de Guignes, Suard, etc., without attempting to discriminate the shades of their characters, or the degrees of our connection. Alone, in a morning visit, I commonly found the artists and authors of Paris less vain, and more reasonable, than in the circles of their equals, with whom they mingle in the houses

[1] [Gibbon recorded in his journal in May, 1763: "Heureux effet de ce caractère léger et aimable du Français, qui a établi dans Paris une douceur et une liberté dans la société, inconnues à l'antiquité, et encore ignorées des autres nations" (*Misc. Works*, i., 163).

"In general," writes Walpole (*Letters*, iv., 413), "the style of conversation is solemn, pedantic, and seldom animated but by a dispute. I was expressing my aversion to disputes. Mr. Hume, who very gratefully admires the tone of Paris, having never known any other tone, said with great surprise, "Why, what do you like, if you hate both disputes and whisk [whist]?"]

[2] ["Montmorency is a dirty little town 14 miles from Paris. In the house called *L'Ermitage*, about half a mile off, Rousseau resided" (Murray's *Handbook for France*, ed. 1859, p. 22). His *Emile*, published in 1762, being condemned by the Parliament of Paris, he fled (*Œuvres de Rousseau*, ed. 1782, xxiv., 3).]

[3] ["The immortal Buffon]" (*The Decline*, iv., 243). "Read (it is no unpleasing task) the incomparable articles of the *Horse* and the *Camel* in the *Natural History* of M. de Buffon" (*ib.*, v., 315; see *post*, p. 199).]

[4] [For these eminent men and women see Appendix 28.]

of the rich.[1] Four days in a week, I had a place, without invitation, at the hospitable tables of Mesdames Geoffrin and du Bocage, of the celebrated Helvetius, and of the Baron d'Olbach. In these symposia the pleasures of the table were improved by lively and liberal conversation[2]; the company was select, though various and voluntary.

The society of Madame du Bocage was more soft and moderate than that of her rivals, and the evening conversations of M. de Foncemagne were supported by the good sense and learning of the principal members of the Academy of Inscriptions. The opera and the Italians I occasionally visited; but the French theatre, both in tragedy and comedy, was my daily and favourite amusement. Two famous actresses then divided the public applause. For my own part, I preferred the consummate art of the Claron, to the intemperate sallies of the Dumesnil,[3] which were extolled by her admirers, as the genuine voice of nature and passion.[4]

[1] ["Every woman has one or two authors planted in her house, and God knows how they water them" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 416). "You know in England we read their works, but seldom or never take any notice of authors. We think them sufficiently paid if their books sell, and of course leave them to their colleges and obscurity, by which means we are not troubled with their vanity and impertinence" (*ib.*, v., 26).]

[2] [For "the intolerant zeal" of the guests see *Auto.*, pp. 204, 262.]

[3] [Horace Walpole wrote two years later: "The Dumesnil is still the Dumesnil, and nothing but curiosity could make me want the Clairon [she had left the stage]" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 407, 422). In 1779 he wrote: "I cannot think that acting, however perfectly, what others have written is one of the most astonishing talents; yet I will own as fairly that Mrs. Porter and Mademoiselle Dumesnil have struck me so much as even to reverence them" (*ib.*, vii., 170). Grimm, in 1790, described Mrs. Siddons as "la Clairon ou la Dumesnil de l'Angleterre" (*Mémoires*, etc., vii., 405).]

[4] [Here follows a passage in two of the Memoirs (*Auto.*, pp. 205, 263), where he writes that he "reserved for the last the most exquisite blessing of life—a female friend who received me every evening with the smile of confidence and joy". To his step-mother he wrote of her: "She seems to have conceived a real motherly attachment for me" (*Corres.*, i., 31). If the attachment that she felt for him was of that nature, why did he record (*Auto.*, p. 263): "If her heart was tender, if her passions were warm, decency and gratitude should cast a veil over her frailties"? Why, we may ask, did he thus raise the veil?

In 1766 he wrote to a Lausanne friend [the original spelling is reproduced]: "J'espere, mon cher ami, que vous ne vous etes rejetté a corps perdu dans la fureur amoureuse. . . . Je ne sai si vous goutez mes principes et la préférence que je commence a donner au Physique de l'Amour sur le Moral. A la cour de Cythére, comme dans toutes les autres, ne vaut il pas mieux faire des Dupes que de l'être soi-même? Cette façon ramene tot ou tard un homme sensé mais

Fourteen weeks insensibly stole away; but had I been rich and independent, I should have prolonged, and perhaps have fixed, my residence at Paris.

Between the expensive style of Paris and of Italy it was prudent to interpose some months of tranquil simplicity; and at the thoughts of Lausanne I again lived in the pleasures and studies of my early youth. Shaping my course through Dijon and Besançon, in the last of which places I was kindly entertained by my cousin Acton,[1] I arrived in the month of May 1763 on the banks of the Leman Lake. It had been my intention to pass the Alps in the autumn, but such are the simple attractions of the place, that the year had almost expired before my departure from Lausanne in the ensuing spring. An absence of five years had not made much alteration in manners, or even in persons. My old friends, of both sexes, hailed my voluntary return; the most genuine proof of my attachment. They had been flattered by the present of my book, the produce of their soil; and the good Pavilliard shed tears of joy as he embraced a pupil, whose literary merit he might fairly impute to his own labours. To my old list I added some new acquaintance, and among the strangers I shall distinguish Prince Lewis of Wirtemberg, the brother of the reigning Duke,[2] at whose country-house, near Lausanne, I frequently dined: a wandering meteor, and at length a falling star, his light and ambitious spirit had successively

honnête et delicat au commerce des femmes mariées. Une femme ne peut jamais méconnoitre vos vues, et vous n'aurez point la douleur de vous reprocher le malheur d'une jeune personne qui n'est été trop credule que parcequ'elle vous a trop aimé. Monsieur le Mari (je parle des pays Civilisés, et la Suisse commence à l'être) se sent soulagé d'une partie du fardeau qu'il ne portoit qu'à regret, et ne sait comment témoigner sa reconnoissance à son bon ami qui veut bien rechercher comme un plaisir ce qu'il lui paraissoit un devoir pénible" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 354).]

[1] [*Ante*, p. 24; *Corres.*, i., 37.]

[2] [Voltaire had lent the Duke 80,000 francs, tempted by the high interest. Gibbon wrote in 1768: "The Duke is ruined, the security worth nothing, and the money vanished". Three years earlier Voltaire, announcing the sale of his villa, *Les Délices*, had written: "J'ai craint de mourir de faim aussi bien que de vieillesse". In 1778, by the intervention of the King of Prussia, he was paid back 20,000 francs (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, liii., 38; lxi., 331; *Gibbon Corres.*, i., 91).]

dropped from the firmament of Prussia, of France, and of Austria; and his faults, which he styled his misfortunes, had driven him into philosophic exile in the Pays de Vaud. He could now moralize on the vanity of the world, the equality of mankind, and the happiness of a private station. His address was affable and polite, and as he had shone in courts and armies, his memory could supply, and his eloquence could adorn, a copious fund of interesting anecdotes. His first enthusiasm was that of charity and agriculture; but the sage gradually lapsed in the saint, and Prince Lewis of Wirtemberg is now buried in a hermitage near Mayence, in the last stage of mystic devotion.[1] By some ecclesiastical quarrel, Voltaire had been provoked to withdraw himself from Lausanne, and retire to his castle at Ferney,[2] where I again visited the poet and the actor, without seeking his more intimate acquaintance, to which I might now have pleaded a better title. But the theatre which he had founded, the actors whom he had formed, survived the loss of their master[3]; and, recent from Paris, I attended with pleasure at the representation of several tragedies and comedies. I shall not descend to specify particular names and characters; but I cannot forget a private institution, which will display the innocent freedom

[1] [Gibbon recorded of him: "Je vois qu'il n'a point l'orgueil d'un prince Allemand, et l'indignation qu'il faisait paraître contre un de ses ancêtres, qui avait voulu vendre un village pour acheter un cheval, me fait espérer qu'il n'en a pas la dureté. Je croirais assez qu'il a toujours un peu manqué de prudence et de conduite; des projets aussi ambitieux que chimériques dont on l'accuse, sa vie ambulante, ses querelles avec son frère, ses dissipations, sa disgrace à la cour de Vienne; tout contribue à m'en persuader" (*Misc. Works*, i., 166). Gibbon adds in a footnote: "V. *Le Testament Politique du Maréchal de Belle-isle.* Ouvrage digne d'un laquais, mais d'un laquais de ministre, qui a entendu beaucoup d'anecdotes curieuses." Voltaire wrote to the Prince in 1756: "Un vieux malade, retiré sur les bords d'un lac, n'est plus fait pour entretenir un jeune prince guerrier, quelque philosophe que soit ce prince" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, lviii., ii., 31; see also *ib.* for his letters to Voltaire).]

[2] ["Il habita d'abord alternativement Monrion, sur le territoire de Lausanne, et les Délices, sur celui de Genève (1755-57); mais, au bout de quelques années (1758), se trouvant trop près des tracasseries tant politiques que religieuses de la république genevoise, il fit acquisition de Tourney et de Ferney, deux terres du pays de Gex, entre lesquelles il se partageait. Il finit par se fixer à Ferney" (*Biog. Univ.*, xlix., 479).]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 104.]

of Swiss manners.[1] My favourite society had assumed, from the age of its members, the proud denomination of the spring (*la société du printems*).[2] It consisted of fifteen or twenty young unmarried ladies, of genteel, though not of the very first families; the eldest perhaps about twenty, all agreeable, several handsome, and two or three of exquisite beauty. At each other's houses they assembled almost every day, without the controul, or even the presence, of a mother or an aunt; they were trusted to their own prudence, among a crowd of young men of every nation of Europe. They laughed, they sung, they danced, they played at cards, they acted comedies; but in the midst of this careless gaiety, they respected themselves, and were respected by the men; the invisible line between liberty and licentiousness was never transgressed by a gesture, a word, or a look, and their virgin chastity was never sullied by the breath of scandal or suspicion: a singular institution, expressive of the innocent simplicity of Swiss manners. After having tasted the luxury of England and Paris, I could not have returned with satisfaction to the coarse and homely table of Madame Pavilliard[3]; nor was her husband offended that I now entered myself as a *pensionnaire*, or boarder, in the elegant house of Mr. De Mesery, which may be entitled to a short remembrance, as it has stood above twenty years, perhaps, without a parallel in Europe. The house in which we lodged was spacious and convenient, in the best street, and commanding, from behind, a noble prospect over the country and the Lake. Our table was served with neatness and plenty; the boarders were select[4]; we had the liberty of inviting any guests at a stated price; and in the summer the scene was occasionally transferred to a pleasant villa, about a

[1] ["Lausanne, Avril 17, 1764. Les femmes sont jolies, et malgré leur grande liberté, elles sont très sages. Tout au plus peuvent-elles être un peu complaisantes, dans l'idée honnête, mais incertaine, de prendre un étranger dans leurs filets" (*Misc. Works*, i., 178).]

[2] [General Read found the rules of the society in the garrets of La Grotte (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 326).]

[3] [*Ante*, pp. 84, 117.]

[4] [Gibbon had written, "the boarders were numerous" (*Auto.*, p. 208). Lord Sheffield made them "select".]

league from Lausanne. The characters of Master and Mistress were happily suited to each other, and to their situation. At the age of seventy-five, Madame de Mesery, who has survived her husband, is still a graceful, I had almost said, a handsome woman. She was alike qualified to preside in her kitchen and her drawing-room ; and such was the equal propriety of her conduct, that of two or three hundred foreigners, none ever failed in respect, none could complain of her neglect, and none could ever boast of her favour. Mesery himself, of the noble family of De Crousaz,[1] was a man of the world, a jovial companion, whose easy manners and natural sallies maintained the cheerfulness of his house. His wit could laugh at his own ignorance : he disguised, by an air of profusion, a strict attention to his interest ; and in this situation he appeared like a nobleman who spent his fortune and entertained his friends.[2] In this agreeable society I resided nearly eleven months (May 1763—April 1764) ; and in this second visit to Lausanne, among a crowd of my English companions, I knew and esteemed Mr. Holroyd (now Lord Sheffield) ; and our mutual attachment was renewed and fortified in the subsequent stages of our Italian journey.[3] Our lives are in the power of chance, and a slight variation on either side, in time or place, might have deprived me of a friend, whose activity in the ardour of youth was always prompted by a benevolent heart,[4] and directed by a strong understanding.

If my studies at Paris had been confined to the study of the world, three or four months would not have been un-

[1] [*Ante*, p. 87. Gibbon, writing to Lord Sheffield from Lausanne in 1787, about "a novel entitled *Caroline de Lichfield*," continues : "The author, who is since married a second time (Madame de Crousaz, now Montolieu), is a charming woman. I was in some danger" (*Corres.*, ii., 154 ; *post*, Appendix 66).]

[2] ["La maison de M. de Mésery est charmante ; le caractère franc et généreux du mari, les agrémens de la femme, une situation délicieuse, une chère excellente, la compagnie de ses compatriotes, et une liberté parfaite, font aimer ce séjour à tout Anglais. Que je voudrais en trouver un semblable à Londres !" (*Misc. Works*, i., 178.)]

[3] ["Lausanne, Avril 6, 1764. J'ai conçu une véritable amitié pour Holroyd. Il a beaucoup de raison et des sentimens d'honneur, avec un cœur des mieux placés (*ib.*, i., 176).]

[4] [He was a strong upholder of the slave trade (*post*, Appendix 54).]

profitably spent. My visits, however superficial, to the Academy of Medals [1] and the public libraries, opened a new field of inquiry; and the view of so many manuscripts of different ages and characters induced me to consult the two great Benedictine works, the *Diplomatica* of Mabillon,[2] and the *Palæographia* of Montfaucon.[3] I studied the theory without attaining the practice of the art: nor should I complain of the intricacy of Greek abbreviations and Gothic alphabets, since every day, in a familiar language, I am at a loss to decipher the hieroglyphics of a female note. In a tranquil scene, which revived the memory of my first studies, idleness would have been less pardonable: the public libraries of Lausanne and Geneva liberally supplied me with books; and if many hours were lost in dissipation,[4] many more were employed in literary labour. In the country, Horace and Virgil, Juvenal and Ovid, were my assiduous companions: but, in town, I formed and executed a plan of study for the use of my Transalpine expedition: the topography of old Rome, the ancient geography of Italy, and the science of medals. 1. I diligently read, almost always with my pen in my hand, the elaborate treatises of Nardini, Donatus, etc., which fill the fourth volume of the Roman Antiquities of Grævius.[5] 2. I next undertook and finished the *Italia Antiqua* of Cluverius,

[1] ["L'Académie des Belles-Lettres, formée d'abord en 1663 de quelques membres de l'Académie Française, pour transmettre à la postérité par des médailles les actions de Louis XIV, devint utile au public dès qu'elle ne fut plus uniquement occupée du monarque, et qu'elle s'appliqua aux recherches de l'antiquité" etc. (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xviii., 240).]

[2] ["C'est lui qui, étant chargé de montrer le trésor de Saint-Denis, demanda à quitter cet emploi, *parce qu'il n'aimait pas à mêler la fable avec la vérité.* Il a fait de profondes recherches" (*ib.*, xvii., 122).]

[3] ["L'un des plus savans antiquaires de l'Europe" (*ib.*, p. 132). "His *Library of Manuscripts* is almost necessary for every man of letters" (Gibbon, *Misc. Works*, v., 344).]

[4] ["Septembre 21, 1763. Ma réputation baisse ici avec quelque raison." "Septembre 25. J'avais une très belle réputation ici pour les mœurs, mais je vois qu'on commence à me confondre avec mes compatriotes, et à me regarder comme un homme qui aime le vin et le désordre" (*Misc. Works*, i., 170). These excesses he attributed partly "to the habits of the militia" (*Auto.*, p. 208). On Dec. 18, he recorded that he had lost in gambling "une quarantaine de Louis" (*Misc. Works*, i., 171).]

[5] [See *ib.*, v., 313-43.]

a learned native of Prussia, who had measured, on foot, every spot, and has compiled and digested every passage of the ancient writers. These passages in Greek or Latin authors I perused in the text of Cluverius, in two folio volumes [1]: but I separately read the descriptions of Italy by Strabo,[2] Pliny, and Pomponius Mela,[3] the Catalogues of the Epic poets,[4] the Itineraries of Wesseling's Antoninus,[5] and the coasting Voyage of Rutilius Numatianus,[6] and I studied two kindred subjects in the *Mesures Itinéraires* of D'Anville,[7] and the copious work of Bergier, *Histoire des grands Chemins de l'Empire Romani*.[8] From these materials I formed a table of roads and distances reduced to our English measure [9]; filled a folio common-place book with my collections and remarks on the geography of Italy [10]; and inserted in my journal many long and learned notes on the insulæ and populousness of Rome,[11] the social war,[12] the passage of the Alps by Hannibal,[13]

[1] [*Misc. Works*, v., 356-427; 429-431. "Cluverius," he writes, "is too diffuse. . . . Our men of letters are afraid to encounter two volumes in folio" (*ib.*, p. 429).]

[2] [*Ante*, p. 142.]

[3] [Johnson, when in 1763 he accompanied Boswell to Harwich, "had in his pocket *Pomponius Mela de Situ Orbis*, in which he read occasionally, and seemed very intent upon ancient geography" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 465).]

[4] [Gibbon in two papers examined these catalogues (*Misc. Works*, iv., 327-335).]

[5] [*Ib.*, v., 293.]

[6] [*Ib.*, v., 435-442. Gibbon, censuring Rutilius's "swelling words," continues: "I doubt whether *Bellerophonteis sollicitudinibus* be ever quoted, except on account of the singularity that two words should compose a pentameter verse" (*ib.*, p. 440). In *The Decline* (iii., 234) he translates his description of the monks of the Island of Capraria.]

[7] ["The master hand of the first of geographers," writes Gibbon of D'Anville (*The Decline*, v., 450). In another passage he says that "even that ingenious geographer is too fond of supposing new, and perhaps imaginary measures, for the purpose of rendering ancient writers as accurate as himself" (*ib.*, ii., 145). D'Anville undertook "four maps of Roman geography of a size and nature suited to the *History* [*The Decline*]," but he never executed them (*Misc. Works*, ii., 201).]

[8] [Printed in 1622 (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 49). Gibbon speaks of "une infinité de digressions aussi belles que savantes dont M. Bergier a rempli son histoire" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 324).]

[9] ["March 29, 1764. I wrote two pages on the *Itineraries and high Roads of the Romans;* and stop short at present with a rich fund of ninety-two folio pages closely written" (*ib.*, v., 475).]

[10] [*Ib.*, iv., 155-326.]

[11] [*Ib.*, v., 317.]

[12] [*Ib.*, v., 389.]

[13] [*Ib.*, v., 370.]

etc. 3. After glancing my eye over Addison's agreeable dialogues,[1] I more seriously read the great work of Ezechiel Spanheim *de Præstantia et Usu Numismatum*,[2] and applied with him the medals of the kings and emperors, the families and colonies, to the illustration of the ancient history. And thus was I armed for my Italian journey.[3]

I shall advance with rapid brevity in the narrative of this tour, in which somewhat more than a year (April 1764 to May 1765) was agreeably employed. Content with tracing my line of march, and slightly touching on my personal feelings, I shall waive the minute investigation of the scenes which have been viewed by thousands, and described by hundreds of our modern travellers. Rome is the great object of our pilgrimage: and 1st, the journey; 2nd, the residence; and 3rd, the return, will form the most proper and perspicuous division. 1. I climbed Mount Cenis, and descended into the plain of Piedmont, not on the back of an elephant, but on a light osier seat, in the hands of the dextrous and intrepid chairmen of the Alps.[4] The architecture and government of

[1] [*Dialogues on Medals* (Addison's *Works*, ed. 1862, i., 255). It was not published till after the author's death (*ib.*, p. 337). "He dwells on the striking connection between the reverses of medals and the descriptions of Latin poets. . . . The passages of the poets are selected with taste; and the author's reflections are replete with judgment and sagacity" (Gibbon, *Misc. Works*, v., 455).]

[2] ["April 12, 1764. I re-examined Spanheim's work, which is a real treasury of medallic erudition, a classic book on this science" (*ib.*, v., 482). Spanheim gave Bentley his portrait, who bequeathed it to Trinity College, Cambridge (Monk's *Bentley*, ii., 442).]

[3] ["Lausanne, Avril 17, 1764. Je quitte Lausanne avec moins de regret que la première fois. . . . Je voyais Lausanne avec les yeux encore novices d'un jeune homme, qui lui devait la partie raisonnable de son existence, et qui jugeait sans objets de comparaison. Aujourd'hui j'y vois une ville mal bâtie, au milieu d'un pays délicieux, qui jouit de la paix et du repos, et qui les prend pour la liberté" (*Misc. Works*, i., 178).]

[4] [Gray and Horace Walpole crossed Mont Cenis early in November, 1739. "At Lanebourg we were wrapt up in our furs, and seated upon a sort of matted chair without legs, which is carried upon poles in the manner of a bier, and so began to ascend by the help of eight men. It was six miles to the top, where a plain opens itself about as many more in breadth. . . . The descent is six more, but infinitely more steep than the going up; and here the men perfectly fly down with you. . . . We were but five hours in performing the whole" (Mitford's *Gray*, ii., 67). "So, as the song says, we are in fair Italy! I wonder we are; for on the very highest precipice of Mount Cenis, the devil of discord, in the similitude of sour wine, had got amongst our Alpine savages, and set

Turin presented the same aspect of tame and tiresome uniformity: but the court was regulated with decent and splendid œconomy[1]; and I was introduced to his Sardinian majesty Charles Emanuel,[2] who, after the incomparable Frederick, held the second rank (proximus longo tamen intervallo[3]) among the kings of Europe.[4] The size and populousness of Milan could not surprise an inhabitant of London: but the fancy is amused by a visit to the Boromean Islands, an enchanted palace, a work of the fairies in the midst of a lake encompassed with mountains, and far removed from the haunts of men.[5] I was less amused by the marble palaces of Genoa, than by the recent memorials of her deliverance (in

them a-fighting, with Gray and me in the chairs; they rushed him by me on a crag, where there was scarce room for a cloven foot. The least slip had tumbled us into such a fog, and such an eternity as we should never have found our way out of again. . . . We had twelve men and nine mules to carry us, our servants, and baggage." The day before, "in broad sunshine," Walpole's little dog had been carried off by a wolf (Walpole's *Letters*, i., 28).]

[1] [The day before he was presented at Court he wrote: "Everything follows the example of the Court, which from one of the most polite in Europe is become bigoted, gloomy and covetous" (*Corres.*, i., 56).

Twenty-five years earlier Horace Walpole had written: "'Tis really by far one of the prettiest cities I have seen; not one of your large straggling ones that can afford to have twenty dirty suburbs, but clean and compact, very new and very regular. The King's palace is not of the proudest without, but of the richest within; painted, gilt, looking-glassed, very costly, but very tawdry; in short a very popular palace" (Walpole's *Letters*, i., 29).

In *The Decline* (iv., 501) Gibbon, speaking of "the barbarous practice of wearing arms in the midst of peace," continues: "The historian who considers this circumstance as the test of civilization would disdain the barbarism of an European Court".]

[2] ["The most sociable women I have met with are the King's daughters. I chatted for about a quarter of an hour with them, talked about Lausanne, and grew so very free and easy that I drew my snuff-box, rapped it, took snuff twice (a crime never known before in the presence-chamber), and continued my discourse in my usual attitude, of my body bent forwards, and my fore-finger stretched out" (*Corres.*, i., 58).]

[3] ["Proximus huic, longo sed proximus intervallo."
(Virgil, *Æneid*, v., 320.)
"The next, but though the next, yet far disjoined."
(Dryden.)]

[4] [Voltaire thus describes Charles Emanuel (*Œuvres*, xix., 426): "On avait à redouter en lui un politique et un guerrier; un prince qui savait bien choisir ses ministres et ses généraux, et qui pouvait se passer d'eux, grand général lui-même et grand ministre".]

[5] [Gibbon improves on the description he gave of these islands in a letter—"which, by the help of some imagination, we conclude to be a very delightful, though not an enchanted place" (*Corres.*, i., 60).]

December 1746) from the Austrian tyranny; and I took a military survey of every scene of action within the enclosure of her double walls.[1] My steps were detained at Parma and Modena, by the precious relics of the Farnese and Este collections: but, alas! the far greater part had been already transported, by inheritance or purchase, to Naples and Dresden. By the road of Bologna and the Apennine I at last reached Florence, where I reposed from June to September, during the heat of the summer months. In the Gallery, and especially in the Tribune,[2] I first acknowledged, at the feet of the Venus of Medicis, that the chisel may dispute the pre-eminence with the pencil, a truth in the fine arts which cannot on this side of the Alps be felt or understood.[3] At home I had taken some lessons of Italian: on the spot I read, with a learned native, the classics of the Tuscan idiom: but the shortness of my time, and the use of the French language prevented my acquiring any facility of speaking; and I was a silent spectator in the conversations of our envoy, Sir Horace Mann, whose most serious business was that of entertaining the English at his hospitable table.[4] After leaving Florence I compared the solitude of Pisa with the

[1] [The Austrians, supported by the Piedmontese and a squadron of English ships, took Genoa on Sept. 7, 1746. In December, the people, exasperated by their harsh treatment, rose in a riot and drove them out. "L'Europe vit avec surprise qu'un peuple faible, nourri loin des armes, et qui ni son enceinte de rochers, ni les rois de France, d'Espagne, de Naples, n'avaient pu sauver du joug des Autrichiens, l'eût brisé sans aucun secours, et eût chassé ses vainqueurs" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xix., 164, 168-72).

Gibbon recorded in his journal how the people formed "un conseil qu'on appellait Assemblée du Peuple. . . . Elle rendait ses ordonnances sous peine de la vie, et tenait son bourreau assis sur les degrés d'une église, et près d'une potence pour les faire exécuter" (*Misc. Works*, i., 181).]

[2] [The Tribune, or Tribuna, is part of the Galleria degli Uffizi.]

[3] [Gibbon recorded in his journal an interesting criticism of many of the Roman busts (*Misc. Works*, i., 186-91), which might well be included in the Guide Books to Florence.]

[4] [Gibbon recorded on July 29: "Toute la nation dîna chez M. Mann" (*Misc. Works*, i., 191).

Gray described Mann in 1739 as "the best and most obliging person in the world" (Mitford's *Gray*, ii., 79). Horace Walpole, on his way home, began at Calais, in September, 1741, a correspondence with him, which he kept up till Mann's death in 1786. During this long period they never met (Walpole's *Letters*, i., 71; ix., 59).]

industry of Lucca and Leghorn, and continued my journey through Sienna to Rome, where I arrived in the beginning of October. 2. My temper is not very susceptible of enthusiasm[1]; and the enthusiasm which I do not feel, I have ever scorned to affect. But, at the distance of twenty-five years, I can neither forget nor express the strong emotions which agitated my mind as I first approached and entered the *eternal city*.[2] After a sleepless night, I trod, with a lofty step, the ruins of the Forum[3]; each memorable spot where Romulus *stood*,[4] or Tully spoke, or Cæsar fell, was at once present to my eye[5]; and several days of intoxication were lost or enjoyed before I could descend to a cool and minute investigation.[6] My guide was Mr. Byers, a Scotch antiquary of experience and taste[7]; but, in the daily labour of eighteen weeks, the powers of attention were sometimes fatigued, till I was myself qualified, in a last review, to select and study the capital works of ancient and modern art. Six weeks were borrowed for my tour of Naples, the most populous of

[1] [For the sense in which this word was generally used see *ante*, pp. 22, *n.* 2, 147. Here Gibbon uses it in the sense which it bears now—defined by Johnson as, "elevation of fancy; exaltation of ideas".]

[2] ["Romulus Æternae nondum formaverat Urbis
Mœnia, consorti non habitanda Remo."
(Tibullus, ii., 5, 23.)]

[3] [Gibbon, describing how "amidst the ruins of his country Leo IV. stood erect, like one of the firm and lofty columns that rear their heads above the fragments of the Roman Forum," adds in a note: "I have borrowed Voltaire's general expression, but the sight of the Forum has furnished me with a more distinct and lively image" (*The Decline*, vi., 41).]

[4] [Gibbon refers, I think, to Livy, i., 12, where Romulus, hurried along by his fleeing soldiers, vowed a temple to Jupiter Stator, if the god would stop the flight.]

[5] ["To the eye of liberal enthusiasm the majesty of ruin restored the image of her ancient prosperity" (*The Decline*, vii., 132).

Gray wrote from Rome in 1740: "Mr. Walpole says our memory sees more than our eyes in this country. Which is extremely true" (Mitford's *Gray*, ii., 111).]

[6] [Gibbon, a day or two after his arrival, wrote: "I am convinced there never, never existed such a nation, and I hope for the happiness of mankind there never will again" (*Corres.*, i., 67).]

[7] [James Byers or Byres. Bishop Percy in 1791 described him as "the Pope's Antiquary at Rome" (Nichols's *Illus. of Lit.*, vii., 719. See also *ib.*, iii., 726). He at one time owned the Portland Vase, but he sold it to Sir William Hamilton (*Dict. of Nat. Biog.*).]

cities,[1] relative to its size, whose luxurious inhabitants seem to dwell on the confines of paradise and hell-fire. I was presented to the boy-king[2] by our new envoy, Sir William Hamilton[3]; who, wisely diverting his correspondence from the Secretary of State to the Royal Society and British Museum, has elucidated a country of such inestimable value to the naturalist and antiquarian. On my return, I fondly embraced, for the last time, the miracles of Rome; but I departed without kissing the feet of Rezzonico (Clement XIII.[4]), who neither possessed the wit of his predecessor Lambertini,[5] nor the virtues of his successor Ganganelli.[6] 3. In my

[1] [Gray wrote from Naples: "My wonder still increased upon entering the city, which I think for number of people outdoes both Paris and London" (Mitford's *Gray*, ii., 114). "That city, the third in Christian Europe, contains more inhabitants (350,000) in a given space than any other spot in the known world" (*The Decline*, iv., 308).]

[2] [Ferdinand IV. of Naples, afterwards styled Ferdinand I. of the United Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, born in 1751, died in 1825, after experiencing great alternations of fortune (see the *Penny Cyclopædia*, x., 230). Five years after his death his daughter, who had married the Duke of Orleans, became Queen of France. Horace Walpole wrote on Dec. 14, 1767, to Sir Horace Mann (*Letters*, v., 76): "So your King of Naples is a madman or an idiot! And they set aside his eldest brother on the same pretence, to make room for him!"]

[3] [Horace Walpole wrote to Mann on June 8, 1764 (*Letters*, iv., 249): "You have a new neighbour coming to you, Mr. William Hamilton. . . . He is picture-mad, and will ruin himself in virtù-land. His wife is as musical as he is connoisseur, but she is dying of an asthma." His second wife became Lord Nelson's mistress. Lord Holland (*Memoirs*, ii., 22) describes him as "a man of mean capacity, but of some cunning and experience".]

[4] ["Epitaphe du Pape Clément XIII:—

"Ci-gît des vrais croyans le mufti téméraire,
Et de tous les Bourbons l'ennemi déclaré:
De Jésus sur la terre il s'est dit le vicaire;
Je le crois aujourd'hui mal avec son curé."

(*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xii., 364.)

Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son in 1749: "Remember to be presented to the Pope before you leave Rome, and go through the necessary ceremonies for it, whether of kissing his slipper or . . ." (*Letters to his Son*, ii., 222).]

[5] [Benedict XIV. Horace Walpole wrote of him to Mann on Nov. 29, 1756: "I have always had a great partiality for the good old man: I desire you will tell me any anecdotes or stories of him that you know: I remember some of his sayings with great humour and wit" (*Letters*, iii., 49). See also *ib.*, p. 84, for an inscription Walpole wrote behind a bas-relief of the Pope.]

[6] [Clement XIV. "Il était réputé très sage et très circonspect, au-dessus des préjugés monastiques, et capable de soutenir par sa sagesse le colosse du pontificat, qui semblait menacé de sa chute. C'est lui qui a enfin aboli la Société de Jésus par sa bulle de l'année 1773" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xix., 861).]

pilgrimage from Rome to Loretto I again crossed the Apennine; from the coast of the Adriatic I traversed a fruitful and populous country, which could alone disprove the paradox of Montesquieu, that modern Italy is a desert.[1] Without adopting the exclusive prejudice of the natives I sincerely admire the paintings of the Bologna school.[2] I hastened to escape from the sad solitude of Ferrara, which in the age of Cæsar was still more desolate.[3] The spectacle of

[1] [Montesquieu in *Lettres persanes*, No. 113, wrote of Italy: "Quoique tout le monde habite les villes, elles sont entièrement désertes et dépeuplées". He adds: "Après un calcul aussi exact qu'il peut l'être dans ces sortes de choses, j'ai trouvé qu'il y a à peine sur la terre la dixième partie des hommes qui y étaient de temps de César".

Goldsmith upheld this paradox when, in his *Traveller* (l. 133), he said of the Italians:—

> "For wealth was theirs, not far remov'd the date,
> When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state.
> . . . . . .
> Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
> Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
> While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
> But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave."]

[2] [It was Horace Walpole's "favourite school" (*Letters*, ix., 465). Reynolds, describing this school, "of which the first stone was laid by Pellegrino Tibaldi," but which was built by the Caracci, continues: "But the divine part, which addresses itself to the imagination, as possessed by Michael Angelo or Tibaldi, was beyond their grasp; they formed, however, a most respectable school, a style more on the level, and calculated to please a greater number; and if excellence of this kind is to be valued according to the number, rather than the weight and quality of admirers, it would assume even a higher rank in art" (Reynolds's *Works*, ed. 1824, ii., 150).

"There is no doubt that the Bolognese painters sufficed for the eighteenth century, whose taste indeed they had created. There is equally no doubt that for the nineteenth they are insufficient" (Symonds's *Renaissance in Italy*, ed. 1898, vii., 231).

We may wonder whether at Bologna Gibbon ate sausages. "The famous Bologna sausages," he writes, "are said to be made of ass flesh" (*The Decline*, iv., 320). "You may advise me," said Johnson, "to go to live at Bologna to eat sausages. The sausages there are the best in the world; they lose much by being carried" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 195).]

[3] ["In the time of Augustus, and in the middle ages, the whole waste from Aquileia to Ravenna was covered with woods, lakes and morasses" (*The Decline*, iv., 413). An ingenious commentator might have thought that Gibbon referred to Don Cæsar, the last of the House of Este who ruled Ferrara. He was deprived of it, writes Gibbon, by "the ambition and avarice" of Rome. "On January 28, 1598, he evacuated a city in which his ancestors had reigned near four hundred years. . . . Ferrara was left to the solitude and poverty of a provincial town, under the government of priests . . . and within seventeen years after the death of Alphonso II. [1597] a fourth of his capital was already in ruins" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 462).]

Venice afforded some hours of astonishment[1]; the university of Padua is a dying taper[2]: but Verona still boasts her amphitheatre, and his native Vicenza is adorned by the classic architecture of Palladio[3]: the road of Lombardy and Piedmont (did Montesquieu find them without inhabitants?) led me back to Milan, Turin, and the passage of Mount Cenis, where I again crossed the Alps in my way to Lyons.

The use of foreign travel has been often debated as a general question; but the conclusion must be finally applied to the character and circumstances of each individual. With the education of boys, *where* or *how* they may pass over some juvenile years with the least mischief to themselves or others, I have no concern.[4] But after supposing the previous

[1] [For a curious omission in the original see *Auto.*, p. 268. From Venice he wrote: "Of all the towns in Italy I am the least satisfied with Venice; objects which are only singular without being pleasing produce a momentary surprise, which soon gives way to satiety and disgust" (*Corres*, i., 75). "The republic of Venice has deserved the least from the gratitude of scholars" (*The Decline*, vii., 128).]

[2] [Evelyn (*Diary*, ed. 1872, i., 217), who visited it in 1645, described it as "this flourishing and ancient University". Addison (*Works*, i., 385), nearly sixty years later, wrote of it: "The university is of late much more regular than it was formerly, though it is not yet safe walking the streets after sunset". Johnson, in his undergraduate days, was overheard saying to himself: "Well, I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the Universities abroad. I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua.—And I'll mind my business. For an Athenian blockhead is the worst of all blockheads" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 73).]

[3] ["Vicenza is a city . . . full of gentlemen and splendid palaces, to which the famous Palladio, born here, has exceedingly contributed, having been the architect" (Evelyn's *Diary*, i., 227).]

[4] [Milton in his tractate *Of Education* (*Works*, ed. 1806, i., 284) says: "Nor shall we then need the monsieurs of Paris to take our hopeful youth into their slight and prodigal custodies, and send them over back again transformed into mimics, apes, and kickshows".

Gay's moral in *The Monkey who had seen the World* (*Fables*, No. xiv.) is:—

"Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
With travel finishes the fool".

Pope, in the Argument of the fourth *Dunciad*, brings in "a band of young gentlemen returned from travel with their tutors; one of whom delivers to the goddess in a polite oration an account of the whole conduct and fruits of their travels; presenting to her at the same time a young nobleman perfectly accomplished. She receives him graciously, and indues him with the happy quality of want of shame."

Fielding in *Joseph Andrews* (bk. iii., chap. vii.) describes how the squire "made in three years the tour of Europe, as they term it, and returned home well furnished with French clothes, phrases and servants, with a hearty contempt for his own country; especially what had any savour of the plain spirit and honesty of our ancestors".

and indispensable requisites of age, judgment, a competent knowledge of men and books,[1] and a freedom from domestic prejudices, I will briefly describe the qualifications which I deem most essential to a traveller. He should be endowed with an active, indefatigable vigour of mind and body, which can seize every mode of conveyance, and support, with a careless smile, every hardship of the road, the weather, or the inn. The benefits of foreign travel will correspond with the degrees of these qualifications[2]; but, in this sketch, those to whom I am known will not accuse me of framing my own panegyric. It was at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed fryars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter,[3] that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind.[4] But my original plan was circumscribed to the decay of the city rather than of the empire,[5] and though my reading and reflections began to point towards that object, some years elapsed, and several avocations intervened, before I was seriously engaged in the execution of that laborious work.

I had not totally renounced the southern provinces of France, but the letters which I found at Lyons were ex-

Chesterfield thus writes of young travellers: "They set out upon their travels unlicked cubs; and in their travels they only lick one another, for they seldom go into any other company. . . . They come home, at three or four and twenty, refined and polished (as is said in one of Congreve's plays) like Dutch skippers from a whale-fishing" (*Letters to his Son*, ed. 1774, iv., 18).

"A young man," writes Adam Smith, "commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more dissipated, and more incapable of any serious application, either to study or to business, than he could well have become in so short a time had he lived at home" (*The Wealth of Nations*, bk. v., chap. i., ed. 1811, iii., 184. See also *ante*, p. 148, and Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 458).]

[1] ["JOHNSON. As the Spanish proverb says, 'He, who would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry the wealth of the Indies with him.' So it is in travelling; a man must carry knowledge with him, if he would bring home knowledge'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 302).]

[2] [See *Auto.*, p. 269, for many more "qualifications".]

[3] ["The Church and Convent of Araceli, the bare-foot friars of St. Francis, occupy the Temple of Jupiter" (*The Decline*, vii., 226).]

[4] [See Appendix 29.]

[5] ["If I prosecute this History, I shall not be unmindful of the decline and fall of the *city* of Rome; an interesting object, to which my plan was originally confined" (*The Decline*, iv., 20).]

pressive of some impatience. Rome and Italy had satiated my curious appetite, and I was now ready to return to the peaceful retreat of my family and books. After a happy fortnight I reluctantly left Paris, embarked at Calais, again landed at Dover, after an interval of two years and five months, and hastily drove through the summer dust and solitude of London. On the 25th of June, 1765, I arrived at my father's house: and[1] the five years and a half between my travels and my father's death (1770) are the portion of my life which I passed with the least enjoyment, and which I remember with the least satisfaction.[2] Every spring I attended the monthly meeting and exercise of the militia at Southampton; and by the resignation of my father, and the death of Sir Thomas Worsley,[3] I was successively promoted to the rank of major and lieutenant-colonel commandant; but I was each year more disgusted with the inn, the wine, the company, and the tiresome repetition of annual attendance and daily exercise. At home, the economy of the family and farm still maintained the same creditable appearance. My connection with Mrs. Gibbon was mellowed into a warm and solid attachment: my growing years abolished the distance that might yet remain between a parent and a son, and my behaviour satisfied my father, who was proud of the success, however imperfect in his own life-time, of my literary talents. Our solitude was soon and often enlivened by the visit of the friend of my youth, Mr. Deyverdun,[4] whose absence from Lausanne I had sincerely lamented. About three years after my first departure, he had emigrated from his native lake to the banks of the Oder in Germany. The *res angusta domi*,[5] the waste of a decent patrimony, by an improvident father, obliged him, like many of his countrymen, to confide in his

[1] [The connection of the two clauses, which is so imperfect, was quite clear in the original. Gibbon wrote: "On the 25th of June, 1765, I reached the rural mansion of my parents. . . . After my first (1758) and my second return to England (1765), the forms of the pictures were nearly the same; but the colours had been darkened by time; and the five years, etc." (*Auto.*, p. 271).]

[2] [He surely forgets his "boyish years" (*ante*, p. 46).]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 136.]

[4] [*Ib.*, p. 86.]

[5] [Juvenal, *Sat.*, iii., 165.]

own industry; and he was entrusted with the education of a young prince, the grandson of the Margrave of Schavedt, of the Royal Family of Prussia. Our friendship was never cooled, our correspondence was sometimes interrupted; but I rather wished than hoped to obtain Mr. Deyverdun for the companion of my Italian tour. An unhappy, though honourable, passion drove him from his German court; and the attractions of hope and curiosity were fortified by the expectation of my speedy return to England. During four successive summers he passed several weeks or months at Buriton, and our free conversations, on every topic that could interest the heart or understanding, would have reconciled me to a desert or a prison. In the winter months of London my sphere of knowledge and action was somewhat enlarged, by the many new acquaintance which I had contracted in the militia and abroad; and I must regret, as more than an acquaintance, Mr. Godfrey Clarke of Derbyshire, an amiable and worthy young man, who was snatched away by an untimely death.[1] A weekly convivial meeting was established by myself and travellers, under the name of the Roman Club.[2]

The renewal, or perhaps the improvement, of my English life was embittered by the alteration of my own feelings. At the age of twenty-one I was, in my proper station of a youth, delivered from the yoke of education, and delighted with the comparative state of liberty and affluence. My filial obedience was natural and easy; and in the gay prospect of futurity, my

[1] [He was one of the members for Derbyshire. He died on Dec. 26, 1774 (*Gent. Mag.*, 1774, p. 599). On Aug. 7, 1773, Gibbon wrote to Holroyd: "Boodle's and Atwood's are now no more. The last stragglers, and Clarke in the rear of all, are moved away to their several castles; and I now enjoy in the midst of London a delicious solitude. My library, Kensington Gardens, and a few parties with new acquaintance who are chained to London (among whom I reckon Goldsmith and Sir Joshua Reynolds) fill up my time" (*Corres.*, i., 191).]

[2] The members were Lord Mountstuart (now Marquis of Bute), Colonel Edmonstone, William Weddal, Rev. Mr. Palgrave, Earl of Berkley, Godfrey Clarke (Member for Derbyshire), Holroyd (Lord Sheffield), Major Ridley, Thomas Charles Bigge, Sir William Guize, Sir John Aubrey, the late Earl of Abingdon, Hon. Peregrine Bertie, Rev. Mr. Cleaver, Hon. John Damer, Hon. George Damer (late Earl of Dorchester), Sir Thomas Gascoyne, Sir John Hort, E. Gibbon.—SHEFFIELD.

ambition did not extend beyond the enjoyment of my books, my leisure, and my patrimonial estate, undisturbed by the cares of a family and the duties of a profession. But in the militia I was armed with power; in my travels, I was exempt from controul; and as I approached, as I gradually passed my thirtieth year, I began to feel the desire of being master in my own house. The most gentle authority will sometimes frown without reason, the most cheerful submission will sometimes murmur without cause; and such is the law of our imperfect nature, that we must either command or obey; that our personal liberty is supported by the obsequiousness of our own dependants. While so many of my acquaintance were married or in parliament, or advancing with a rapid step in the various roads of honour and fortune, I stood alone, immoveable and insignificant; for after the monthly meeting of 1770,[1] I had even withdrawn myself from the militia, by the resignation of an empty and barren commission. My temper is not susceptible of envy, and the view of successful merit has always excited my warmest applause. The miseries of a vacant life were never known to a man whose hours were insufficient for the inexhaustible pleasures of study. But I lamented that at the proper age I had not embraced the lucrative pursuits of the law[2] or of trade, the chances of civil office or India adventure, or even the fat slumbers of the church[3]; and my repentance became more lively as the loss of time was more irretrievable. Experience showed me the use of grafting my private consequence on the importance of a great professional body; the benefits of those firm connections which are cemented by hope and interest, by gratitude and emulation, by the mutual exchange of services and favours. From the emoluments of a profession I might have derived an ample fortune, or a competent income, instead of being

[1] [*Post*, Appendix 24.]

[2] [*Ante*, p. 113.]

[3] [Only two or three years before he thus basely lamented, he made the following entry in his journal about an Italian author: "Il se plaint à tout moment de sa pauvreté. Il connaît peu la véritable dignité d'un homme de lettres" (*Misc. Works*, i., 192).]

stinted to the same narrow allowance, to be increased only by an event which I sincerely deprecated. The progress and the knowledge of our domestic disorders aggravated my anxiety, and I began to apprehend that I might be left in my old age without the fruits either of industry or inheritance.

In the first summer after my return, whilst I enjoyed at Buriton the society of my friend Deyverdun, our daily conversations expatiated over the field of ancient and modern literature; and we freely discussed my studies, my first Essay, and my future projects. The Decline and Fall of Rome I still contemplated at an awful distance: but the two historical designs which had balanced my choice were submitted to his taste: and in the parallel between the Revolutions of Florence and Switzerland, our common partiality for a country which was *his* by birth, and *mine* by adoption, inclined the scale in favour of the latter. According to the plan, which was soon conceived and digested, I embraced a period of two hundred years, from the association of the three peasants of the Alps to the plenitude and prosperity of the Helvetic body in the sixteenth century. I should have described the deliverance and victory of the Swiss, who have never shed the blood of their tyrants but in a field of battle[1]; the laws and manners of the confederate states; the splendid trophies of the Austrian, Burgundian, and Italian wars; and the wisdom of a nation, which, after some sallies of martial adventure, has been content to guard the blessings of peace with the sword of freedom.

——Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem.

My judgment, as well as my enthusiasm, was satisfied with the glorious theme; and the assistance of Deyverdun seemed to remove an insuperable obstacle. The French or Latin memorials, of which I was not ignorant, are inconsiderable in

[1] [As Gibbon did not believe in the story of William Tell (*Misc. Works*, iii., 265), he was justified in passing over Gessler's death.]

number and weight; but in the perfect acquaintance of my friend with the German language, I found the key of a more valuable collection. The most necessary books were procured; he translated for my use, the folio volume of Schilling, a copious and contemporary relation of the war of Burgundy; we read and marked the most interesting parts of the great chronicle of Tschudi; and by his labour, or that of an inferior assistant, large extracts were made from the History of Lauffer and the Dictionary of Lew: yet such was the distance and delay, that two years elapsed in these preparatory steps; and it was late in the third summer (1767) before I entered, with these slender materials, on the more agreeable task of composition. A specimen of my History, the first book, was read the following winter in a literary society of foreigners in London; and as the author was unknown, I listened, without observation, to the free strictures, and unfavourable sentence, of my judges.[1] The momentary sensation was painful; but their condemnation was ratified by my cooler thoughts. I delivered my imperfect sheets to the flames,[2] and for ever renounced a design in which some expense, much labour, and more time had been so vainly consumed. I cannot regret the loss of a slight and superficial essay, for such the work must have been in the hands of a stranger, uninformed by the scholars and statesmen, and remote from the libraries and archives of the Swiss republics. My ancient habits, and the presence of Deyverdun, encouraged me to write in French for the continent of Europe; but I was conscious myself that my style, above prose and below poetry, degenerated into a verbose and turgid declamation. Perhaps I may impute the failure to the injudicious choice of a foreign language. Perhaps I may suspect that the language itself is ill adapted

[1] [See Appendix 30.]

[2] He neglected to burn them. He left at Sheffield-Place the introduction, or first book, in forty-three pages folio, written in a very small hand, besides a considerable number of notes. Mr. Hume's opinion, expressed in the letter in the last note [Appendix 30], perhaps may justify the publication of it.—SHEFFIELD.

[The *Introduction à l'Histoire Générale de la République des Suisses* fills ninety pages of vol. iii. of Gibbon's *Misc. Works.*]

to sustain the vigour and dignity of an important narrative. But if France, so rich in literary merit, had produced a great original historian, his genius would have formed and fixed the idiom to the proper tone, the peculiar mode of historical eloquence.

It was in search of some liberal and lucrative employment that my friend Deyverdun had visited England. His remittances from home were scanty and precarious. My purse was always open, but it was often empty; and I bitterly felt the want of riches and power, which might have enabled me to correct the errors of his fortune. His wishes and qualifications solicited the station of the travelling governor of some wealthy pupil; but every vacancy provoked so many eager candidates, that for a long time I struggled without success; nor was it till after much application that I could even place him as a clerk in the office of the Secretary of State. In a residence of several years he never acquired the just pronunciation and familiar use of the English tongue, but he read our most difficult authors with ease and taste: his critical knowledge of our language and poetry was such as few foreigners have possessed; and few of our countrymen could enjoy the theatre of Shakspeare and Garrick with more exquisite feeling and discernment. The consciousness of his own strength, and the assurance of my aid, emboldened him to imitate the example of Dr. Maty, whose *Journal Britannique*[1] was esteemed and regretted; and to improve his model, by uniting with the transactions of literature a philosophic view of the arts and manners of the British nation. Our Journal for the year 1767, under the title of *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne*, was soon finished, and sent to the press.[2] For the first article, Lord Lyttelton's History of Henry II., I must own myself responsible; but the public has ratified my judgment of that voluminous work, in

[1] [*Ante*, p. 124.]

[2] [It was published in 1768. For an interesting letter by Gibbon about the first number see *Misc. Works*, ii., 68.]

which sense and learning are not illuminated by a ray of genius.[1] The next specimen was the choice of my friend, *The Bath Guide*, a light and whimsical performance, of local, and even verbal, pleasantry.[2] I started at the attempt: he smiled at my fears: his courage was justified by success; and a master of both languages will applaud the curious felicity with which he has transfused into French prose the spirit, and even the humour, of the English verse.[3] It is not my

[1] [Gibbon, after praising "deux grands hommes," Robertson and Hume, continues: "Nous ne prodiguerons jamais à la grandeur la récompense des talens: Mylord L. ne doit point prétendre à la gloire de ces hommes de génie, mais il lui reste les qualités d'un bon citoyen, d'un savant très-éclairé, d'un écrivain exact et impartial, et c'est avec plaisir que nous les lui accordons" (P. 29).

On July 14, 1767, Hume wrote to Adam Smith: "Have you read Lord Lyttelton? Do you not admire his Whiggery and his Piety; qualities so useful both for this world and the next?" (*Hume MSS.* in the Royal Society of Edinburgh).

"BOSWELL. 'I rather think, Sir, that Toryism prevails in this reign.' JOHNSON. 'I know not why you should think so, Sir. You see your friend Lord Lyttelton, a nobleman, is obliged in his *History* to write the most vulgar Whiggism'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 221).

Johnson, in his *Life of Lyttelton*, describes how this History "was published with such anxiety as only vanity can dictate" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 492).]

[2] [*The New Bath Guide*, by Christopher Anstey, is in the list of books in the *Gent. Mag.* for May, 1766, p. 241. Horace Walpole wrote on June 20 (*Letters*, iv., 504): "It stole into the world, and for a fortnight no soul looked into it, concluding its name was its true name. No such thing. It is a set of letters in verse, in all kinds of verses, describing the life at Bath, and incidentally everything else; but so much wit, so much humour, fun and poetry, so much originality, never met together before. Then the man has a better ear than Dryden or Handel. . . . I can say it by heart, though a quarto, and if I had time would write it you down; for it is not yet reprinted, and not one to be had."

Gray wrote on Aug. 26: "Have you read *The New Bath Guide?* it is the only thing in fashion, and is a new and original kind of humour" (Mitford's *Gray's Works*, iv., 84).

According to Cary (*Lives of the Poets*, p. 184), after the second edition was published the author sold the copyright to Dodsley for £200.]

[3] [The following is a specimen of the verses and the translation. The hero describes a consultation of doctors over his case (Letter iv.):—

"Good doctor, I'm yours—'tis a fine day for walking—
Sad news in the papers—God knows who's to blame!
The colonies seem to be all in a flame—
This stamp act, no doubt, might be good for the crown,
But I fear 'tis a pill that will never go down—
What can Portugal mean? is *she* going to stir up
Convulsions and heats in the bowels of Europe?
'Twill be fatal if England relapses again,
From the ill blood and humours of Europe and Spain."

"Bon jour, mon cher Docteur.—Le beau temps pour la promenade.—Il y a de bien mauvaises nouvelles dans les papiers—Dieu sait à qui il faut s'en prendre.—Les colonies paraissent toutes dans une inflammation. Cet Acte du Timbre

wish to deny how deeply I was interested in these Memoirs, of which I need not surely be ashamed; but at the distance of more than twenty years, it would be impossible for me to ascertain the respective shares of the two associates. A long and intimate communication of ideas had cast our sentiments and style in the same mould. In our social labours we composed and corrected by turns; and the praise which I might honestly bestow, would fall perhaps on some article or passage most properly my own. A second volume (for the year 1768) was published of these Memoirs.[1] I will presume to say, that their merit was superior to their reputation; but it is not less true, that they were productive of more reputation than emolument. They introduced my friend to the protection, and myself to the acquaintance, of the Earl of Chesterfield, whose age and infirmities secluded him from the world,[2] and of Mr. David Hume, who was under-secretary to the office in which Deyverdun was more humbly employed.[3] The former accepted a dedication (April 12, 1769), and

peut être bon, sans doute, pour la Cour, mais je crains qu'on ne puisse jamais leur faire avaler la pillule.—Que fait le Portugal?—Excitera-t-il une fermentation dans les entrailles de l'Europe?—L'Angleterre est à la veille d'une rechute fatale: gare les mauvaises humeurs du sang des Bourbons" (P. 33).]

[1] [This volume is not in the British Museum. Lowndes (ed. 1871, p. 886) records the sale of both vols. for £4 19s. and £6 16s. 6d. Messrs. H. Sotheran & Co. believe that no copy has ever passed through their hands.]

[2] [On Dec. 25, 1767, Chesterfield wrote: "I have no actual illness nor pain to complain of, but I am as lame of my legs as when you saw me, and must expect to be so for the rest of my life" (Chesterfield's *Misc. Works*, ed. 1779, iv., 316). On March 12, 1768, he wrote: "My deafness deprives me of the only rational pleasure that I can have at my age, which is society; so that I read my eyes out every day, that I may not hang myself" (*Letters to his Son*, iv., 272). One is surprised to find him two years later, cut off as he was from society and in his seventy-sixth year, ordering "four dozen of shirts" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 328).]

[3] [In February, 1767, Hume was appointed Under-Secretary of State by the Secretary of State, General Conway. By Conway's resignation in the following January he lost his office (Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, pp. 103, 115). On Dec. 2, 1766, Hume wrote to the Countess de Boufflers: "A few posts ago I received a very curious letter from a Swiss gentleman who resides in London, but whom I never either saw or heard of before; his name is Deyverdun, and he calls himself a native of Lausanne. He says that he was extremely surprised to find that Rousseau had accused me of being the author or accomplice of two libels wrote against him. . . . Now the Swiss gentleman tells me that he himself was the author of them, and gives me leave to publish his letter for that purpose to the whole world" (*Private Corres. of Hume*, p. 230). For Rousseau's attack on Hume see Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, pp. 74-103.]

reserved the author for the future education of his successor [1]: the latter enriched the Journal with a reply to Mr. Walpole's Historical Doubts, which he afterwards shaped into the form of a note.[2] The materials of the third volume were almost completed, when I recommended Deyverdun as governor to Sir Richard Worsley, a youth, the son of my old Lieutenant-colonel, who was lately deceased.[3] They set forwards on

[1] [His cousin, who in March, 1773, succeeded him as fifth earl, was at this time under the tuition of Dr. Dodd, who, eight years later, was hanged for forging the young man's name. In 1772 the youth was at Leipsig with Deyverdun as his tutor (Chesterfield's *Misc. Works*, iv., 208-9). On Sept. 10, 1773, Gibbon wrote to Holroyd: "I forgot to tell you that I have declined the publication of Lord Chesterfield's Letters. The public will see them, and upon the whole I think with pleasure; but the whole family were strongly bent against it; and, especially on Deyverdun's account, I deemed it more prudent to avoid making them my personal enemies" (*Corres.*, i., 195). For the opposition of the family to the publication see my introduction to *Eighteenth Century Letters* (*Johnson and Chesterfield*), 1898.

On April 2, 1774, Gibbon wrote that "Deyverdun had been forced to quit Lord C., by the little peer's strange behaviour," etc. (*Corres.*, i., 210).]

[2] [More than half the article is by Gibbon, who thus concludes: "Les argumens de M. Walpole nous avaient ébloui sans nous convaincre. Les réflexions suivantes nous ont ramené au sentiment général; elles sont de M. Hume, qui nous les a communiquées avec la permission d'en enrichir nos Mémoires" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 341).

The "note" is given in Hume's *History*, ed. 1773, iii., 454. "Nothing," writes Hume of Walpole (*ib.*, p. 460), "can be a stronger proof how ingenious and agreeable that gentleman's pen is, than his being able to make an enquiry concerning a remote point of English antiquities an object of general conversation. The foregoing note has been enlarged on account of that performance."

Walpole recorded in his *Short Notes of my Life* (*Letters*, Preface, p. 75), under date of May, 1769: "Mr. David Hume had introduced to me one Diverdun [*sic*], a Swiss in the Secretary's office. This man wrote *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne;* and Mr. Hume desired I would give him a copy of *Lord Herbert's Life*, that he might insert an extract in his Journal. I did. . . . In this new Journal [*Mémoires*, 1768] I found a criticism on my *Historic Doubts*, with notes by Mr. Hume, to which the critic declared he gave the preference. Mr. Hume had shown me the notes last year in manuscript, but this conduct appeared so paltry, added to Mr. Hume's total silence, that I immediately wrote an answer, not only to these notes, but to other things that had been written against my *Doubts*. However, as I treated Mr. Hume with the severity he deserved, I resolved not to print this answer, only to show it to him in manuscript, and to leave it behind as an appendix to, and confirmation of, my *Historic Doubts*."]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 168. Gibbon wrote on March 21, 1772: "Sir Richard Worsley is just come home. I am sorry to see many alterations, and little improvement. From an honest wild English buck, he is grown a *philosopher*. Lord Petersfield displeases everybody by the affectation of consequence; the young baronet disgusts no less by the affectation of wisdom. He speaks in short sentences, quotes Montaigne, seldom smiles, never laughs, drinks only water, professes to command his passions, and intends to marry in five months" (*Corres.*, i., 153).

By "Lord Petersfield" Gibbon meant William Jolliffe, the Lord of the Manor (see *ib.*, i., 171).]

their travels; nor did they return to England till some time after my father's death.

My next publication was an accidental sally of love and resentment; of my reverence for modest genius, and my aversion for insolent pedantry. The sixth book of the Æneid is the most pleasing and perfect composition of Latin poetry. The descent of Æneas and the Sibyl to the infernal regions, to the world of spirits, expands an awful and boundless prospect, from the nocturnal gloom of the Cumæan grot,

Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram,[1]

to the meridian brightness of the Elysian fields;

Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit
Purpureo[2]——

from the dreams of simple Nature, to the dreams, alas! of Egyptian theology, and the philosophy of the Greeks. But the final dismission of the hero through the ivory gate, whence

Falsa ad cœlum mittunt insomnia manes,[3]

seems to dissolve the whole enchantment, and leaves the reader in a state of cold and anxious scepticism. This most lame and impotent conclusion has been variously imputed to the taste or irreligion of Virgil; but, according to the more elaborate interpretation of Bishop Warburton, the descent to hell is not a false, but a mimic scene; which represents the initiation of Æneas, in the character of a lawgiver, to the Eleusinian mysteries. This hypothesis, a singular chapter in the Divine Legation of Moses,[4] had been admitted by many

[1] [*Æneid*, vi., 268.
"Obscure they went through dreary shades, that led
Along the waste dominions of the dead."
(Dryden.)]

[2] [*Æneid*, vi., 640.
"The verdant fields with those of heaven may vie,
With ether vested, and a purple sky."
(Dryden.)]

[3] [*Æneid*, vi., 896.
"Through polished ivory pass deluding lies."
(Dryden.)]

[4] [Book ii., sect. 4.]

as true; it was praised by all as ingenious; nor had it been exposed, in a space of thirty years, to a fair and critical discussion. The learning and the abilities of the author had raised him to a just eminence; but he reigned the dictator and tyrant of the world of literature.[1] The real merit of Warburton was degraded by the pride and presumption with which he pronounced his infallible decrees; in his polemic writings he lashed his antagonists without mercy or moderation; and his servile flatterers (see the base and malignant Essay on the *Delicacy of Friendship*[2]), exalting the master critic far above Aristotle and Longinus,[3] assaulted every modest dissenter who refused to consult the oracle, and to adore the idol.[4] In a land of liberty, such despotism must provoke a

[1] ["The state of authorship," wrote Warburton, "whatever that of nature may be, is certainly a state of war" (*Remarks on Several Occasional Reflections*, ed. 1744, p. 3). Pope had said before him: "The life of a wit is a warfare upon earth" (Warton's *Pope's Works*, ed. 1822, i., 63).

"When I read Warburton first (said Johnson) and observed his force, and his contempt of mankind, I thought he had driven the world before him; but I soon found that was not the case; for Warburton, by extending his abuse, rendered it ineffectual" (Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 93).

Gibbon, after quoting from Procopius an obscene anecdote of Theodora, says: "I have heard that a learned prelate, now deceased, was fond of quoting this passage in conversation" (*The Decline*, iv., 213). I suspect that Warburton is meant from the close juxtaposition of the following note on p. 215: "'Let greatness own her, and she's mean no more,' etc. Without Warburton's critical telescope I should never have seen in the general picture of triumphant vice any personal allusion to Theodora." Warburton's note is given in his edition of *Pope's Works*, iv., 309.]

[2] [By Richard Hurd, afterwards Bishop of Worcester. Published anonymously in 1755. It became scarce and would have remained forgotten, had not Parr reprinted it in 1789, from a MS. copy which, when he was a schoolmaster, he had set two of his boys to make (Johnstone's *Parr's Works*, i., 291). See *ib.*, p. 307, for the explanation of Parr's enmity, and Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 47. Gibbon charges Hurd with "the assassination of Jortin" in this book (*Auto.*, p. 304). For Jortin see Johnson's *Letters*, ii., 276, and Pattison's *Essays*, ii., 131. Gibbon had at Lausanne engravings both of Warburton and Hurd (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 479).

In a copy of *The Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate to one of his Friends* [Warburton to Hurd] Macaulay wrote at the head of the first letter, "Bully to Sneak" (Trevelyan's *Macaulay*, ed. 1877, ii., 469).]

[3] [Gibbon refers to the dedication of Hurd's edition of Horace's *Epistle to Augustus*. He quotes the passage in his *Critical Observations* (*Misc. Works*, iv., 509).]

[4] [Hume wrote in 1771: "Warburton and all his gang, the most scurrilous, arrogant and impudent fellows in the world, have been abusing me in their usual style these twenty years" (*Letters to Strahan*, p. 200). In his *Autobiography* Hume says: "Dr. Hurd wrote a pamphlet against my *Natural History of*

general opposition, and the zeal of opposition is seldom candid or impartial. A late professor of Oxford (Dr. Lowth), in a pointed and polished epistle (August 31, 1765), defended himself, and attacked the Bishop; and, whatsoever might be the merits of an insignificant controversy, his victory was clearly established by the silent confusion of Warburton and his slaves.[1] *I* too, without any private offence, was ambitious of breaking a lance against the giant's shield; and in the beginning of the year 1770, my Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid were sent, without my name, to the press.[2] In this short Essay, my first English publication, I aimed my strokes against the person and the hypothesis of Bishop Warburton. I proved, at least to my own satisfaction, *that* the ancient lawgivers did not invent the mysteries, and *that* Æneas was never invested with the office of lawgiver:[3] *that* there is not any argument, any circumstance, which can melt a fable into allegory, or remove the scene from the Lake Avernus to the Temple of Ceres: *that* such a wild supposition is equally injurious to the poet and the man: *that* if Virgil was not initiated he could not, if he were, he would not, reveal the secrets of the initiation: *that* the anathema of Horace (*vetabo qui Cereris sacrum vulgarit, etc.*) at once attests his own ignorance and the innocence of his friend.[4] As the Bishop of Gloucester and his party maintained a discreet silence, my critical disquisition was soon lost among the pamphlets of the day; but the public coldness was over-

Religion with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance and scurrility which distinguish the Warburtonian school" (*ib.*, preface, p. 28).

"The secret intentions of Julian are revealed by the late Bishop of Gloucester, the learned and dogmatic Warburton; who, with the authority of a theologian, prescribes the motives and conduct of the Supreme Being. The discourse entitled *Julian* is strongly marked with all the peculiarities which are imputed to the Warburtonian school" (*The Decline*, ii., 457).]

[1] [*Ante*, p. 49. "His Majesty then talked of the controversy between Warburton and Lowth, which he seemed to have read, and asked Johnson what he thought of it. Johnson answered, "Warburton has most general, most scholastick learning; Lowth is the more correct scholar. I do not know which of them calls names best" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 37).]

[2] [*Misc. Works*, iv., 467.]

[3] [*Ib.*, iv., 479, 484.]

[4] [See Appendix 31.]

balanced to my feelings by the weighty approbation of the last and best editor of Virgil, Professor Heyne of Gottingen, who acquiesces in my confutation, and styles the unknown author, *doctus . . . et elegantissimus Britannus.*[1] But I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing the favourable judgment of Mr. Hayley, himself a poet and a scholar: "An intricate hypothesis, twisted into a long and laboured chain of quotation and argument, the Dissertation on the Sixth Book of Virgil, remained some time unrefuted. . . . At length, a superior, but anonymous critic arose, who, in one of the most judicious and spirited essays that our nation has produced, on a point of classical literature, completely overturned this ill-founded edifice, and exposed the arrogance and futility of its assuming architect."[2] He even condescends to justify an acrimony of style, which had been gently blamed by the more unbiassed German; "*Paullo acrius quam velis . . . perstrinxit.*[3]" But I cannot forgive myself the contemptuous treatment of a man who, with all his faults, was entitled to my esteem[4];

[1] [In Heyne's *Virgil*, Leipsic, 1787, ii., 804, the unknown author is styled "vir doctus," and p. 821, *n.*, "elegantissimus Britannus".]

[2] [Hayley's *Poetical Works*, ed. 1785, ii., 112.]

[3] The editor of the *Warburtonian Tracts*, Dr. Parr (p. 192), considers the allegorical interpretation "as completely refuted in a most clear, elegant and decisive work of criticism; which could not, indeed, derive authority from the greatest name; but to which the greatest name might with propriety have been affixed.—GIBBON.

[Parr added in a note that "this book is ascribed, and I think with great probability," to Gibbon (Parr's *Works*, iii., 417). For the *Warburtonian Tracts* see Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 47.

Hayley, after quoting Heyne's remark, continues: "But what lover of poetry, unbiassed by personal connection, can speak of Warburton without some marks of indignation? . . . He has sullied the page of every poet whom he pretended to illustrate, and frequently degraded the generous profession of criticism into a mean instrument of personal malignity" (*ib.*, p. 116).

Gray records Warburton's "contemptuous treatment" of Richard Terrick, who was made Bishop of London in 1764. "Now I am talking of Bishops," Gray wrote, "I must tell you that not long ago Bishop Warburton, in a sermon at Court, asserted that all preferments were bestowed on the most illiterate and worthless objects, and in speaking turned himself about, and stared directly at the Bishop of London; he added, that if any one arose distinguished for merit and learning, there was a combination of dunces to keep him down. I need not tell you that he expected the Bishopric of London himself when Terrick got it" (Mitford's *Gray's Works*, iv., 49).]

[4] The Divine Legation of Moses is a monument, already crumbling in the dust, of the vigour and weakness of the human mind. If Warburton's new argument proved anything, it would be a demonstration against the legislator,

and I can less forgive, in a personal attack, the cowardly concealment of my name and character.

In the fifteen years between my Essay on the Study of Literature and the first volume of the Decline and Fall (1761-1776), this criticism on Warburton, and some articles in the Journal, were my sole publications. It is more especially incumbent on me to mark the employment, or to confess the waste of time, from my travels to my father's death, an interval in which I was not diverted by any professional duties from the labours and pleasures of a studious life. 1. As soon as I was released from the fruitless task of the Swiss revolutions (1768), I began gradually to advance from the wish to the hope, from the hope to the design, from the design to the execution, of my historical work, of whose limits and extent I had yet a very inadequate notion. The Classics, as low as Tacitus, the younger Pliny, and Juvenal, were my old and familiar companions. I insensibly plunged into the ocean of the Augustan history; and in the descending series I investigated, with my pen almost always in my hand, the original records, both Greek and Latin, from Dion Cassius to Ammianus Marcellinus,[1] from the reign of Trajan

who left his people without the knowledge of a future state. But some episodes of the work, on the Greek philosophy, the hieroglyphics of Egypt, etc., are entitled to the praise of learning, imagination, and discernment.—GIBBON.

[Warburton's "new argument" is thus summed up by its author: "Having proved my three principal propositions,

I. 'That the inculcating the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is necessary to the well-being of society.'

II. 'That all mankind, especially the most wise and learned nations of antiquity, have concurred in believing and teaching that this doctrine was of such use to civil society.'

III. 'That the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is not to be found in, nor did make part of the *Mosaic* Dispensation.'

The conclusion is that therefore THE LAW OF MOSES IS OF DIVINE ORIGIN" (*The Divine Legation*, ed. 1765, v., 403).

In Mr. Murray's ed. of the *Auto.*, p. 283, the above note and note 3 on p. 180 are assigned to Lord Sheffield. That they are Gibbon's is shown *ib.*, p. 305.]

[1] [Gibbon thus mentions him in *The Decline*, iii., 122, under the date of A.D. 379-382: "It is not without the most sincere regret that I must now take leave of an accurate and faithful guide, who has composed the history of his own times without indulging the prejudices and passions which usually affect the mind of a contemporary".

"Mr. Gibbon shows, it is true, so strong a dislike to Christianity as visibly disqualifies him for that society of which he has created Ammianus Marcellinus president" (Porson's *Letters to Travis*, ed. 1790, Preface, p. 28).]

to the last age of the Western Cæsars. The subsidiary rays of medals, and inscriptions of geography and chronology, were thrown on their proper objects [1]; and I applied the collections of Tillemont, whose inimitable accuracy almost assumes the character of genius,[2] to fix and arrange within my reach the loose and scattered atoms of historical information. Through the darkness of the middle ages I explored my way in the Annals and Antiquities of Italy of the learned Muratori [3]; and diligently compared them with the parallel or transverse lines of Sigonius and Maffei,[4] Baronius and Pagi,[5] till I almost grasped the ruins of Rome in the fourteenth century,[6] without suspecting that this final chapter must be attained by the labour of six quartos and twenty years. Among the books which I purchased, the Theodosian Code, with the commentary of James Godefroy,[7] must be gratefully remembered. I used

[1] [*Ante*, p. 160.]

[2] [*Post*, p. 232. Gibbon does not always speak of him so respectfully. "Tillemont endeavours to pick his way. The patient and sure-footed mule of the Alps may be trusted in the most slippery paths" (*The Decline*, iii., 48). "Tillemont has raked together all the dirt of the Fathers; an useful scavenger!" (*ib.*, iii., 153).]

[3] [Muratori, early in the eighteenth century, "reformed the ducal library of Modena. The name of Muratori will be for ever connected with the literature of his country. . . . His numerous writings . . . are impressed with sense and knowledge, with moderation and candour; he moved in the narrow circle of an Italian priest; but a desire of freedom, a ray of philosophic light sometimes breaks through his own prejudices and those of his readers. . . . He will not aspire to the fame of historical genius; his modesty may be content with the solid, though humble praise of an impartial critic and indefatigable compiler" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 365-7). In *The Decline* (vii., 300) Gibbon speaks of him as "my guide and master in the history of Italy".]

[4] ["Even Sigonius too freely copied the classic method of supplying from reason or fancy the deficiency of records" (*ib.*, vii., 224). For the Marquis Maffei's *Verona Illustrata* see *ib.*, p. 316.]

[5] [*Ante*, p. 68, *n.* "Baronius is copious and florid, but he is accused of placing the lies of different ages on the same level of authenticity" (*The Decline*, iii., 389). "Father Pagi, to whom good letters have many obligations, shows (in his *Dissertatio Hypatica*, p. 368) that he read history like a monk" (*Misc. Works*, v., 574). For their "angry growl" see *The Decline*, iv., 195.]

[6] [The last chapter of *The Decline*, opens with the "Prospect of the Ruins of Rome in the Fifteenth Century". "In the last days of Pope Eugenius IV. [A.D. 1430] two of his servants, the learned Poggius and a friend, ascended the Capitoline Hill; reposed themselves among the ruins of columns and temples; and viewed from that commanding spot the wide and various prospect of desolation."]

[7] ["His mind was balanced by the opposite prejudices of a Civilian and a Protestant" (*The Decline*, ii., 319).]

it (and much I used it) as a work of history, rather than of jurisprudence: but in every light it may be considered as a full and capacious repository of the political state of the empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. As I believed, and as I still believe, that the propagation of the Gospel, and the triumph of the church, are inseparably connected with the decline of the Roman monarchy,[1] I weighed the causes and effects of the revolution, and contrasted the narratives and apologies of the Christians themselves, with the glances of candour or enmity which the Pagans have cast on the rising sects.[2] The Jewish and Heathen testimonies, as they are collected and illustrated by Dr. Lardner,[3] directed, without superseding, my search of the originals; and in an ample dissertation on the miraculous darkness of the passion, I privately drew my conclusions from the silence of an unbelieving age.[4] I have assembled the preparatory studies,

[1] ["As the happiness of a *future* life is the great object of religion, we may hear without surprise or scandal that the introduction, or at least the abuse, of Christianity, had some influence on the decline and fall of the Roman empire. The clergy successfully preached the doctrines of patience and pusillanimity; the active virtues of society were discouraged; and the last remains of military spirit were buried in the cloister," etc. (*The Decline*, iv., 162). "The monks were more expensive and more numerous than the soldiers of the East" (*ib.*, iv., 341). "The disputes of the TRINITY were succeeded by those of the INCARNATION, alike scandalous to the Church, alike pernicious to the State" (*ib.*, v., 96). "The verbal disputes of the Oriental sects have shaken the pillars of the Church and State" (*ib.*, v., 106). "The religion of the Greeks could only teach them to suffer and to yield" (*ib.*, vi., 95). "The schism of Constantinople, by alienating her most useful allies, and provoking her most dangerous enemies, has precipitated the decline and fall of the Roman empire in the East" (*ib.*, vi., 366). "I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion" (*ib.*, vii., 308).]

[2] [For Gibbon's admiration of "the incomparable pliancy of a Polytheist" see *The Decline*, iii., 31.]

[3] [Nathaniel Lardner, D.D., 1688-1768. "The scandalous calumnies of Augustine, Pope Leo, etc., which Tillemont swallows like a child, and Lardner refutes like a man," etc. (*The Decline*, iii., 154).]

[4] ["Under the reign of Tiberius the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman empire, was involved in a præternatural darkness of three hours. Even this miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity, and the devotion of mankind, passed without notice in an age of science and history. It happened during the lifetime of Seneca and the elder Pliny, who must have experienced the immediate effects, or received the earliest intelligence of the prodigy. Each of these philosophers, in a laborious work, has recorded all the great phenomena of Nature, earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses which his indefatigable curiosity could collect. Both the one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomenon to which the mortal eye has been witness since the creation of the globe" (*ib.*, ii., 70).]

directly or indirectly relative to my history; but, in strict equity, they must be spread beyond this period of my life, over the two summers (1771 and 1772) that elapsed between my father's death and my settlement in London. 2. In a free conversation with books and men, it would be endless to enumerate the names and characters of all who are introduced to our acquaintance; but in this general acquaintance we may select the degrees of friendship and esteem. According to the wise maxim, *Multum legere potius quam multa*, I reviewed, again and again, the immortal works of the French and English, the Latin and Italian classics. My Greek studies (though less assiduous than I designed) maintained and extended my knowledge of that incomparable idiom. Homer and Xenophon[1] were still my favourite authors; and I had almost prepared for the press an Essay on the Cyropœdia, which, in my own judgment, is not unhappily laboured. After a certain age, the new publications of merit are the sole food of the many; and the most austere student will be often tempted to break the line, for the sake of indulging his own curiosity, and of providing the topics of fashionable currency. A more respectable motive may be assigned for the third perusal of Blackstone's Commentaries, and a copious and critical abstract of that English work was my first serious production in my native language.[2] 3. My literary leisure was much less complete and independent than it might appear to the eye of a stranger. In the hurry of London I was destitute of books; in the solitude of Hampshire I was not master of my time. My quiet was gradually disturbed by our domestic anxiety, and I should be ashamed of my unfeeling philosophy, had I found much time or taste for

[1] [*Ante*, p. 92. Gibbon's praise of Herodotus is comical enough. "He has erected an elegant trophy to his own fame and to that of his country" (*ib.*, ii., 145).]

[2] [In his *Remarks on Blackstone's Commentaries* Gibbon says (evidently in reference to the second section of the Introduction): "I have entirely omitted a metaphysical inquiry upon the nature of laws in general, eternal and positive laws, and a number of sublime terms, which I admire as much as I can without understanding them" (*Misc. Works*, v., 546).]

study in the last fatal summer (1770) of my father's decay and dissolution.

The disembodying of the militia at the close of the war (1763) had restored the Major (a new Cincinnatus) to a life of agriculture. His labours were useful, his pleasures innocent, his wishes moderate ; and my father *seemed* to enjoy the state of happiness which is celebrated by poets and philosophers, as the most agreeable to nature, and the least accessible to fortune.

> Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis
> (Ut prisca gens mortalium)
> Paterna rura bubus exercet suis,
> Solutus omni fœnore.[1]

But the last indispensable condition, the freedom from debt, was wanting to my father's felicity ; and the vanities of his youth were severely punished by the solicitude and sorrow of his declining age. The first mortgage, on my return from Lausanne (1758), had afforded him a partial and transient relief.[2] The annual demand of interest and allowance was a heavy deduction from his income ; the militia was a source of expence, the farm in his hands was not a profitable adventure, he was loaded with the costs and damages of an obsolete law-suit ; and each year multiplied the number, and exhausted the patience, of his creditors. Under these painful circumstances, I consented to an additional mortgage,[3] to the sale of Putney,[4] and to every sacrifice that could alleviate his dis-

[1] [Horace, *Epod.*, ii., 1.

> "Like the first mortals, blest is he
> From debts, and usury, and business free,
> With his own team who ploughs the soil,
> Which grateful once confessed his father's toil."
>
> (FRANCIS.)]

[2] [It was a mortgage of £10,000, raised on an entailed estate ; his son consenting to break the entail, and the father, in return, settling on him an annuity for life of £300 (*Auto.*, pp. 155, 243, 399 ; *Corres.*, i., 69). What Gibbon thought of entails he shows in his chapter on Roman Law. "The simplicity of the civil law was never clouded by the long and intricate entails which confine the happiness and freedom of unborn generations" (*The Decline*, iv., 491).]

[3] [It must have been one of £7,000, as the total of the mortgages left by his father was £17,000 (*Auto.*, p. 290).]

[4] [It was sold for £8,500 (*Corres.*, i., 105, 107, and *Misc. Works*, i., 19, *n.*).]

tress. But he was no longer capable of a rational effort, and his reluctant delays postponed not the evils themselves, but the remedies of those evils (*remedia malorum potius quam mala differebat*).[1] The pangs of shame, tenderness, and self-reproach, incessantly preyed on his vitals; his constitution was broken; he lost his strength and his sight; the rapid progress of a dropsy admonished him of his end, and he sunk into the grave on the tenth of November, 1770,[2] in the sixty-fourth year of his age. A family tradition insinuates that Mr. William Law had drawn his pupil in the light and inconstant character of *Flatus*,[3] who is ever confident, and ever disappointed in the chace of happiness. But these constitutional failings were happily compensated by the virtues of the head and heart, by the warmest sentiments of honour and humanity. His graceful person, polite address, gentle manners, and unaffected cheerfulness, recommended him to the favour of every company[4]; and in the change of times and opinions, his liberal spirit had long since delivered him from the zeal and prejudice of a Tory education. I submitted to the order of Nature; and my grief was soothed by the conscious satisfaction that I had discharged all the duties of filial piety.[5]

As soon as I had paid the last solemn duties to my father,

[1] ["Remedia potius malorum quam mala differebat" (Tacitus, *Hist.*, iii., 54).

To his step-mother he wrote on Jan. 21, 1769: "For God's sake, for all our sakes, press my father to recollect everything, to look out everything, and to send us everything that he can. All our difficulties proceed from former carelessness" (*Corres.*, i., 97).]

[2] [It was on Nov. 12 his father died (see *Corres.*, i., 117, 122).]

[3] [*A Serious Call*, ch. xii. Gibbon's father was Law's pupil when the book was published. The chapter may have been written as a warning to him; but it is impossible to believe that his character was drawn.]

[4] [*Ante*, p. 115.]

[5] [Gibbon wrote to Holroyd on April 29, 1767, when his father "was taken dangerously ill": "I can assure you, my dear Holroyd, that the same event appears in a very different light when the danger is serious and immediate; or when, in the gaiety of a tavern dinner, we affect an insensibility that would do us no great honour were it real" (*Corres.*, i., 86). On April 13, 1774, he wrote of a friend who had lost his father: "Incredible as it sounds to the generality of sons, and as it ought to sound to most fathers, he considered the old gentleman as a friend" (*ib.*, i., 211).]

and obtained, from time and reason, a tolerable composure of mind, I began to form the plan of an independent life, most adapted to my circumstances and inclination. Yet so intricate was the net, my efforts were so awkward and feeble, that nearly two years (November, 1770—October, 1772) were suffered to elapse before I could disentangle myself from the management of the farm,[1] and transfer my residence from Buriton to a house in London.[2] During this interval I continued to divide my year between town and the country; but my new situation was brightened by hope; my stay in London was prolonged into the summer; and the uniformity of the summer was occasionally broken by visits and excursions at a distance from home. The gratification of my desires (they were not immoderate[3]) has been seldom disappointed by the want of money or credit; my pride was never insulted by the visit of an importunate tradesman; and any transient anxiety for the past or future has been dispelled by the studious or social occupation of the present hour. My conscience does not accuse me of any act of extravagance or injustice, and the remnant of my estate affords an ample and honourable provision for my declining age. I shall not expatiate on my economical affairs,[4] which cannot be instructive or amusing to

[1] [Seventeen years later, when he was trying to sell the estate, he wrote: "What is the difficulty of the title? Will men of sense, in a sensible country, never get rid of the tyranny of lawyers? more oppressive and ridiculous than even the old yoke of the clergy" (*ib.*, ii., 200).]

[2] [Gibbon wrote to Holroyd from Buriton in 1772: "I am just arrived, as well as yourself, at my *dii penates*, but with very different intention. You will ever remain a bigot to those rustic deities; I propose to abjure them soon, and to reconcile myself to the Catholic Church of London. . . . I am so happy, so exquisitely happy, at feeling so many mountains taken off my shoulders that I can brave your indignation, and even the three-forked lightning of Jupiter himself" (*Corres.*, i., 155, 165).

On Feb. 11, 1773, he wrote to his step-mother "from my own house in Bentinck Street [No. 7]" (*ib.*, i., 179). On May 24, 1774, he wrote to Holroyd: "Never pretend to allure me, by painting in odious colours the dust of London. I love the dust, and whenever I move into the Wold, it is to visit you and My lady, and not your Trees" (*ib.*, i., 218).]

[3] ["A rational voluptuary adheres with invariable respect to the temperate dictates of nature, and improves the gratifications of sense by social intercourse, endearing connections, and the soft colouring of taste and imagination" (*The Decline*, i., 146).]

[4] [For a long passage in which he had "expatiated" see *Auto.*, pp. 289-291. At the end of it he consoles himself by the reflection that his "patrimony had been diminished in the enjoyment of life".]

the reader. It is a rule of prudence, as well as of politeness, to reserve such confidence for the ear of a private friend, without exposing our situation to the envy or pity of strangers; for envy is productive of hatred, and pity borders too nearly on contempt. Yet I may believe, and even assert, that in circumstances more indigent or more wealthy, I should never have accomplished the task, or acquired the fame, of an historian; that my spirit would have been broken by poverty and contempt, and that my industry might have been relaxed in the labour and luxury of a superfluous fortune.[1]

I had now attained the first of earthly blessings, independence.[2] I was the absolute master of my hours and actions: nor was I deceived in the hope that the establishment of my library in town would allow me to divide the day between study and society. Each year the circle of my acquaintance, the number of my dead and living companions, was enlarged. To a lover of books, the shops and sales of London present irresistible temptations; and the manufacture of my History required a various and growing stock of materials.[3] The

[1] [See *post*, p. 243, for "the golden mediocrity of my fortune".]

[2] [See *Auto.*, p. 306, for a curious omission in the text, where Gibbon describes "the solid comforts of life," and adds: "These advantages were crowned by the first," etc.

On May 8, 1762, he recorded in his journal: "I can command all the conveniences of life, and I can command too that independence (that first earthly blessing) which is hardly to be met with in a higher or lower fortune" (*Misc. Works*, i., 147).]

[3] [Gibbon wrote in 1779: "The greatest city in the world is still destitute of a public library; and the writer who has undertaken to treat any large historical subject is reduced to the necessity of purchasing, for his private use, a numerous and valuable collection of the books which must form the basis of his work" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 591).

In 1792, writing about "the future fate" of his library, he said: "If indeed a true liberal public library existed in London, I might be tempted to enrich the catalogue" (*Corres.*, ii., 301).

Johnson used to read in the library at the Queen's House (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 33).

So early as 1758 rules had been drawn up for the British Museum Library (*Gent. Mag.*, 1758, p. 629). It was increased in 1763 by 30,000 books and tracts of the Civil Wars presented by the King (*ib.*, 1763, p. 576). The restrictions imposed by the rules and by the officials were great.

Froude, writing of the year 1834, says: "In the British Museum lay concealed somewhere 'a collection of French pamphlets' on the Revolution, the completest in the world, which, after six weeks' wrestle with officiality, Carlyle was obliged to find 'inaccessible' to him" (Froude's *Carlyle* (1795-1835), ed. 1882, ii., 450).]

militia, my travels, the House of Commons, the fame of an author, contributed to multiply my connections: I was chosen a member of the fashionable clubs; and, before I left England in 1783, there were few persons of any eminence in the literary or political world to whom I was a stranger.[1] It would most assuredly be in my power to amuse the reader with a gallery of portraits and a collection of anecdotes. But I have always condemned the practice of transforming a private memorial into a vehicle of satire or praise. By my own choice I passed in town the greatest part of the year; but whenever I was desirous of breathing the air of the country, I possessed an hospitable retreat at Sheffield-place in Sussex, in the family of my valuable friend Mr. Holroyd, whose character, under the name of Lord Sheffield, has since been more conspicuous to the public.[2]

No sooner was I settled in my house and library, than I undertook the composition of the first volume of my History. At the outset all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work,[3] the true æra of the Decline and Fall of the Empire, the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narrative; and I was often tempted to cast away the labour of seven years. The style of an author

[1] [See Appendix 32.]

[2] [A view of Sheffield Place is given in vol. i. of Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, and a portrait of Lord Sheffield in *The Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, p. 112. On Nov. 27, 1780, Gibbon wrote "to Mrs. Holroyd announcing that Colonel Holroyd was created Lord Sheffield": "Mr. Gibbon presents his respectful compliments to Lady Sheffield, and hopes her Ladyship is in perfect health, as well as the Honble. Miss Holroyd, and the Honble. Miss Louisa Holroyd. Mr. Gibbon has not had the honour of hearing from Lord Sheffield since his Lordship reached Coventry, but supposes that the Election begins this day. Be honest. How does this read? Do you not feel some titillations of vanity?" (*Corres.*, i., 392.)

As Lord Sheffield's was an Irish peerage he could still sit in the House of Commons for any place in Great Britain.]

[3] [In *The Decline*, iii., 268, he mentions "a rough draught of the present History made as early as 1771". The first mention of it in his letters is on Sept. 10, 1773, where he speaks of "the prosecution of my great work" (*Corres.*, i., 194). A year later he wrote of a journey to Bath: "It will most wonderfully delay the fall of the Roman Empire" (*ib.*, p. 230). On June 7, 1775, he mentions the full title in a letter to his step-mother: "I am just at present engaged in a great Historical Work, no less than a History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. . . . During some years it has been in my thoughts and even under my pen" (*ib.*, p. 259).]

should be the image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise.[1] Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect.[2] In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size; and they might still be compressed, without any loss of facts or sentiments.[3] An opposite fault may be imputed to the concise and superficial narrative of the first reigns from Commodus to Alexander; a fault of which I have never heard, except from Mr. Hume in his last journey to London.[4] Such an oracle might have been consulted and obeyed with rational devotion; but I was soon

[1] [*Ante*, p. 1.]

[2] [As to Gibbon's style, much as he sometimes admired it, R. P. [Richard Porson] was wont to remark "that it would be a good exercise for a schoolboy to translate occasionally a page of Gibbon into English" (Porson's *Tracts*, Preface, p. 46). "In endeavouring to avoid vulgar terms he too frequently dignifies trifles, and clothes common thoughts in a splendid dress that would be rich enough for the noblest ideas. . . . Sometimes in his anxiety to vary his phrase he becomes obscure. . . . Sometimes in his attempts at elegance he loses sight of English, and sometimes of sense" (Porson's *Letters to Travis*, Preface, pp. 28-30).

Burke, in a letter quoted in Dugald Stewart's *Life of Robertson*, ed. 1811, p. 370, probably having Gibbon mainly in view, criticises "a style which," he says, "daily gains ground amongst us. . . . The tendency of the mode is to establish two very different idioms amongst us, and to introduce a marked distinction between the English that is written and the English that is spoken. . . . From this feigned manner of *falsetto*, as I think the musicians call something of the same sort in singing, no one modern historian, Robertson only excepted, is perfectly free. It is assumed, I know, to give dignity and variety to the style. But whatever success the attempt may sometimes have, it is always obtained at the expense of purity, and of the graces that are natural and appropriate to our language." Stewart goes on to say: "I can much more easily reconcile myself, in a grave and dignified argument, to the *dulcia vitia* of Tacitus and Gibbon than to that affectation of *cant* words and allusions which so often debases Mr. Burke's eloquence."

See also Landor's *Imag. Conv.*, ed. C. G. Crump, iii., 273, and Landor's *Works*, ed. 1876, viii., 300, for Gibbon's style.]

[3] [See *Corres.*, i., 264.]

[4] [Hume, who died on Aug. 25, 1776, arrived in London from Edinburgh on May 1. He was on his way to Bath, in the vain hope of finding relief there from the illness under which he was sinking (*Letters of Hume to Strahan*, p. 321).]

disgusted with the modest practice of reading the manuscript to my friends. Of such friends some will praise from politeness, and some will criticise from vanity. The author himself is the best judge of his own performance[1]; no one has so deeply meditated on the subject; no one is so sincerely interested in the event.

By the friendship of Mr. (now Lord) Eliot, who had married my first cousin,[2] I was returned at the general election for the borough of Liskeard.[3] I took my seat at the beginning of the memorable contest between Great Britain and America, and supported with many a sincere and silent vote, the rights, though not, perhaps, the interest, of the mother country.[4] After a fleeting illusive hope, prudence condemned me to acquiesce in the humble station of a mute.[5] I was not armed by Nature and education with the intrepid energy of mind and voice,

Vincentem strepitus, et natum rebus agendis.[6]

Timidity was fortified by pride, and even the success of my

[1] ["As to the friendly critic," Gibbon wrote, "it is very difficult to find one who has leisure, candour, freedom and knowledge sufficient. After all, the public is the best critic" (*Corres.*, i., 265).

"'Tis a question variously disputed whether an author may be allowed as a competent judge of his own works. As to the fabric and contrivance of them certainly he may; for that is properly the employment of the judgment. . . . But for the ornament of writing . . . as it is properly the child of fancy, so it can receive no measure, or at least but a very imperfect one, of its own excellence or failures from the judgment" (Dryden's *Works*, ed. 1882, ii., 418).

See *ante*, p. 124.]

[2] [*Ante*, p. 21.] [3] [See Appendix 33.] [4] [*Ib.*, 34.]

[5] [On Feb. 25, 1775, he wrote: "I am still a mute; it is more tremendous than I imagined; the great speakers fill me with despair, the bad ones with terror" (*Corres.*, i., 251). So early as 1760 he wrote to his father: "I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labour may improve, but which Nature alone can bestow. . . . An unexpected objection would disconcert me; and as I am incapable of explaining to others what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating while I ought to be answering" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 39).

See *The Quarterly Review*, No. 100, p. 282, for Milman's criticism of Villemain, "who traces in Gibbon's mute and unambitious parliamentary career the 'coldness of his temperament,' and his 'deadness to all lofty and generous emotions'".]

[6] [Horace, *Ars Poet.*, l. 82:—

"Their numerous cadence was for action fit,
And form'd to quell the clamours of the pit."
(Francis.)]

pen discouraged the trial of my voice.[1] But I assisted[2] at the debates of a free assembly; I listened to the attack and defence of eloquence and reason; I had a near prospect of the characters, views, and passions of the first men of the age. The cause of government was ably vindicated by *Lord North,* a statesman of spotless integrity,[3] a consummate master of debate, who could wield, with equal dexterity, the arms of reason and ridicule. He was seated on the Treasury-bench between his Attorney and Solicitor General, the two pillars of the law and state,[4] *magis pares quam similes*[5]; and the minister might indulge in a short slumber,[6] whilst he was upholden on either hand by the majestic sense of *Thurlow,*[7]

[1] A French sketch of Mr. Gibbon's life, written by himself, probably for the use of some foreign journalist or translator, contains no fact not mentioned in his English life. He there describes himself with his usual candour. "Depuis huit ans il a assisté aux délibérations les plus importantes, mais il ne s'est jamais trouvé *le courage*, ni *le talent*, de parler dans une assemblée publique." This sketch was written before the publication of his three last volumes, as in closing it he says of his History: "Cette entreprise lui demande encore plusieurs années d'une application soutenue; mais quelqu'en soit le succès, il trouve dans cette application même un plaisir toujours varié et toujours renaissant".—SHEFFIELD.

[2] [Johnson, in his *Dictionary*, does not give *assist* in this sense, though a few earlier instances are found. He would probably have censured this "secondary sense" as he censured "the secondary sense of *transpire*. 'To escape from secrecy to notice; a sense lately innovated from France without necessity'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 343).]

[3] [Gibbon was fortunate in having such a leader, for "according to the experience of human nature we may calculate a hundred, nay a thousand chances, against the public virtues of a statesman" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 394. See *post*, p. 228).]

[4] ["With grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state."
(*Paradise Lost*, ii., 300.)]

[5] ["Nam mihi egregie dixisse videtur Servilius Novianus, pares eos magis quam similes" (Quinctilian, *Inst. Orat.*, x., 1). Quoted also by Gibbon (*Misc., Works*, iv., 403).

"*Magis pares quam similes* has been more than once applied to these two great orators [Fox and Pitt]" (Lord Holland's *Memoirs of the Whig Party*, ii., 39).]

[6] [Burke, on March 18, 1779, attacking the supineness of ministers, "hoped that government was not dead, but only asleep. At this moment he looked directly at Lord North, who was asleep, and said in the Scripture phrase, 'Brother Lazarus is not dead, but sleepeth'. The laugh was loud. Even the noble Lord seemed to enjoy the allusion as heartily as the rest of the House, as soon as he was sufficiently awake to understand the cause of the joke" (*Parl. Hist.*, xx., 327).]

[7] [Thurlow was made Chancellor in 1778. "Mr. Fox once said, 'I suppose no man was ever so wise as Thurlow looks, for that is impossible'" (Lord Holland's *Memoirs*, etc., ii., 6). Lord Holland adds that "his language, his

and the skilful eloquence of *Wedderburne.*[1] From the adverse side of the house an ardent and powerful opposition was supported, by the lively declamation of *Barré,*[2] the legal acuteness of *Dunning,*[3] the profuse and philosophic fancy of *Burke,* and the argumentative vehemence of *Fox,* who in the conduct of a party approved himself equal to the conduct of an empire. By such men every operation of peace and war, every principle of justice or policy, every question of authority and freedom, was attacked and defended[4]; and the subject of the momentous contest was the union or separation of Great Britain and America. The eight sessions that I sat in parliament were a school of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian.[5]

The volume of my History, which had been somewhat de-

manner, his public delivery, and even his conduct were all of a piece with his looks; all calculated to inspire the world with a high notion of his gravity, learning, or wisdom; but all assumed for the purpose of concealing the real scantiness of his attainments, the timidity as well as obscurity of his understanding," etc.

"No Sir," said Johnson, "it is when you come close to a man in conversation, that you discover what his real abilities are; to make a speech in a publick assembly is a knack. Now I honour Thurlow, Sir; Thurlow is a fine fellow; he fairly puts his mind to yours" (Boswell's *Johnson,* iv., 179. See also *ib.,* iv., 327). Of the "majestic sense" for which he was so famous the following is an instance. In 1788 a deputation of dissenters waited on him to ask him to support the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. "The Chancellor heard them very civilly, and then said, 'Gentlemen, I'm against you, by G—. I am for the Established Church, d-amne! Not that I have any more regard for the Established Church than for any other church, but because *it is* established. And if you can get your d—d religion established, I'll be for that too!'" (H. C. Robinson's *Diary,* i., 378.)]

[1] [*Post,* p. 206.]

[2] [Gibbon described Barré as "an actor equal to Garrick" (*Corres.,* i., 240).]

[3] [John Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton. "The fact is well known," said Lord Shelburne, "of Lord Loughborough [Wedderburne] beginning a law argument in the absence of Mr. Dunning, but upon hearing him hem in the course of it, his tone so changed that there was not a doubt in any part of the House of the reason of it" (Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne,* iii., 454). His "hem" is explained by Wraxall (*Memoirs,* ed. 1815, ii., 42). "His voice was so husky that he lay always under a necessity of involuntarily announcing his intention to address the House some time before he rose, by repeated attempts to clear his throat."]

[4] ["The use and reputation of oratory among the ancient Arabs is the clearest evidence of public freedom" (*The Decline,* v., 321).]

[5] [Gibbon wrote to Deyverdun on May 20, 1783: "Vous n'avez pas oublié que je suis entré au Parlement sans patriotisme, sans ambition, et que toutes mes vues se bornaient à la place commode et honnête d'un *Lord of Trade*" (*Corres.,* ii., 36).]

layed by the novelty and tumult of a first session, was now ready for the press. After the perilous adventure had been declined by my friend Mr. Elmsley,[1] I agreed, upon easy terms, with Mr. Thomas Cadell, a respectable bookseller, and Mr. William Strahan, an eminent printer[2]; and they undertook the care and risk of the publication, which derived more credit from the name of the shop than from that of the author. The last revisal of the proofs was submitted to my vigilance; and many blemishes of style, which had been invisible in the manuscript, were discovered and corrected in the printed sheet. So moderate were our hopes, that the original impression had been stinted to five hundred,[3] till the number was doubled, by the prophetic taste of Mr. Strahan. During this awful interval I was neither elated by the ambition of fame, nor depressed by the apprehension of contempt. My diligence and accuracy were attested by my own conscience. History is the most popular species of writing, since it can adapt itself to the highest or the lowest capacity. I had chosen an illustrious subject. Rome is familiar to the schoolboy and the statesman; and my narrative was deduced from the last period of classical reading. I had likewise flattered myself, that an age of light and liberty would receive, without scandal, an inquiry into the *human* causes of the progress and establishment of Christianity.[4]

[1] [In like manner John Murray "declined the adventure" of publishing two of the most popular histories of this century—Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella* and Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic* (See Ticknor's *Life of Prescott*, ed. 1864, p. 103, and Holmes's *Memoirs of Motley*, ed. 1889, p. 74). For a brief account of Elmsley see Nichols's *Lit. Anec.*, vi., 440.]

[2] [For an account of Strahan see Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, Preface, p. 43, and of Cadell, *ib.*, p. 92. Hume wrote to Strahan on April 8, 1776: "There will no books of reputation now be printed in London but through your hands and Mr. Cadell's" (*ib.*, p. 314).]

[3] [Wilberforce (*Life*, ii., 199) records how in 1797, when he was publishing his *Practical Christianity*, "Cadell said to him: 'You mean to put your name to the work? Then I think we may venture upon 500 copies.' Within a few days it was out of print, and within half a year 7,500 copies had been called for."]

[4] ["Our curiosity is naturally prompted to inquire by what means the Christian faith obtained so remarkable a victory over the established religions of the earth. To this inquiry an obvious but satisfactory answer may be returned, that it was owing to the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself, and

I am at a loss how to describe the success of the work, without betraying the vanity of the writer. The first impression was exhausted in a few days; a second and third edition were scarcely adequate to the demand[1]; and the bookseller's property was twice invaded by the pirates of Dublin.[2] My book was on every table, and almost on every toilette; the historian was crowned by the taste or fashion of the day; nor was the general voice disturbed by the barking of any *profane* critic.[3] The favour of mankind is most freely bestowed on a new acquaintance of any original merit; and the mutual surprise of the public and their favourite is productive of those warm sensibilities, which at a second meeting can no longer be rekindled. If I listened to the music of praise, I was more seriously satisfied with the approbation of my judges.[4] The candour of Dr. Robertson embraced his disciple.[5] A letter from Mr. Hume overpaid the labour of ten years; but I have never presumed to accept a place in the triumvirate of British historians.[6]

to the ruling providence of its great Author. But as truth and reason seldom find so favourable a reception in the world, and as the wisdom of Providence frequently condescends to use the passions of the human heart, and the general circumstances of mankind, as instruments to execute its purpose, we may still be permitted, though with becoming submission, to ask, not indeed what were the first, but what were the secondary causes of the rapid growth of the Christian Church" (*The Decline*, ii., 2).]

[1] [See Appendix 35.]

[2] [*Post*, p. 233. "The natives," wrote Gibbon, "have printed it very well" (*Corres*, i., 288). Ireland was first brought under the Copyright Act by the 41 Geo. iii., c. 107. See my editions of *Letters of Hume to Strahan*, p. 176, and of *Letters of Johnson and Chesterfield*, Preface, p. 37. Many of Pope's *Poems*, which sold in London at a shilling, were to be had in Dublin for a penny (Elwin and Courthope's *Pope*, vii., 302).

"As soon as Gibbon's *Autobiography* and *Miscellaneous Works* came out (writes William Maltby), they were eagerly devoured both by Porson and myself. Neither of us could afford to purchase the quarto edition; so we bought the Dublin reprint in octavo" (Rogers's *Table Talk and Porsoniana*, p. 303).]

[3] [Gibbon in his *Vindication* mentions "those profane critics whose examination always precedes, and sometimes checks, their religious assent" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 623).]

[4] ["The most grateful incense is the praise which one man of genius bestows on another; we are sure that he feels the merit that he applauds" (*ib.*, iii., 484).]

[5] [See *ib.*, ii., 200-206, for Robertson's correspondence with Gibbon.]

[6] [*Ante*, p. 122. Gibbon cannot have been sincere in writing this. So early as 1761 he had recorded in his journal: "I read Hume's *History of England* to the reign of Henry VII., just published, ingenious but superficial"

That curious and original letter will amuse the reader, and his gratitude should shield my free communication from the reproach of vanity.[1]

"EDINBURGH, 18th March, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,

"As I ran through your volume of history with great avidity and impatience, I cannot forbear discovering somewhat of the same impatience in returning you thanks for your agreeable present, and expressing the satisfaction which the performance has given me. Whether I consider the dignity of your style, the depth of your matter, or the extensiveness of your learning, I must regard the work as equally the object of esteem; and I own that if I had not previously had the happiness of your personal acquaintance, such a performance from an Englishman in our age would have given me some surprise. You may smile at this sentiment; but as it seems to me that your countrymen, for almost a whole generation, have given themselves up to barbarous and absurd faction, and have totally neglected all polite letters, I no longer expected any valuable production ever to come from them.[2] I

(*ib.*, i., 139, *n.*). Soon after the publication of *The Decline* he wrote: "Our good English people groaned for a long time past at the superiority which Robertson and Hume had acquired, and as national prejudice is kept alive at very little expense they hastened to hoist, by dint of acclamations, their unworthy compatriot to the niche of these great men" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 388).]

[1][Hume wrote to Strahan on Feb. 11, 1776: "I am glad to see my friend Gibbon advertised. I am confident it will be a very good book; though I am at a loss to conceive where he finds materials for a volume from Trajan to Constantine" (Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, p. 311). On April 8 he wrote: "Dr. Smith's performance [*The Wealth of Nations*] is another excellent work that has come from your press this winter; but I have ventured to tell him that it requires too much thought to be as popular as Mr. Gibbon's" (*ib.*, p. 315).]

[2][Hume wrote to Strahan on Jan. 30, 1773: "Considering the treatment I have met with, it would have been very silly for me at my years to continue writing any more; and still more blamable to warp my principles and sentiments in conformity to the prejudices of a stupid, factious nation, with whom I am heartily disgusted. . . . It is so sunk in stupidity and barbarism and faction that you may as well think of Lapland for an author. The best book that has been written by any Englishman these thirty years (for Dr. Franklin is an American) is *Tristram Shandy*, bad as it is" (*ib.*, p. 255). "The treatment" he had received was appointment to high offices, a pension of £400 a year, and a higher rate of payment for his *History* than any previous writer had

know it will give you pleasure (as it did me) to find that all the men of letters in this place concur in the admiration of your work, and in their anxious desire of your continuing it.

"When I heard of your undertaking (which was some time ago), I own I was a little curious to see how you would extricate yourself from the subject of your two last chapters. I think you have observed a very prudent temperament; but it was impossible to treat the subject so as not to give grounds of suspicion against you, and you may expect that a clamour will arise. This, if anything, will retard your success with the public; for in every other respect your work is calculated to be popular. But among many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in England [1] prognosticates the fall of philosophy and decay of taste; and though nobody be more capable than you to revive them, you will probably find a struggle in your first advances.

"I see you entertain a great doubt with regard to the authenticity of the poems of Ossian.[2] You are certainly right in so doing. It is indeed strange that any men of sense could have imagined it possible, that above twenty thousand verses, along with numberless historical facts, could have been preserved by oral tradition during fifty generations, by the rudest, perhaps, of all the European nations, the most necessitous, the most turbulent, and the most unsettled. Where a supposition is so contrary to common sense, any positive evidence of it ought never to be regarded. Men run with great avidity to give their evidence in favour of what flatters their passions and their national prejudices. You are therefore over and above indulgent to us in speaking of the matter with hesitation.

ever had (*ib.*, p. 257). In "these thirty years" there had been published *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, the great *Dictionary*, *The Rambler* and *Rasselas*, Collins's *Odes* and all Gray's *Poems*.

With good reason did Bagehot write: "Half Hume's mind, or more than half, was distorted by his hatred of England and his love of France" (*Biog. Studies*, i., 252).]

[1] [Hume refers, I believe, to the great Methodist movement. It had been ridiculed five years earlier by Smollett in *Humphry Clinker*, and three years earlier by Graves in *The Spiritual Quixote*.]

[2] [See Appendix 36.]

"I must inform you that we all are very anxious to hear that you have fully collected the materials for your second volume, and that you are even considerably advanced in the composition of it. I speak this more in the name of my friends than in my own; as I cannot expect to live so long as to see the publication of it. Your ensuing volume will be more delicate than the preceding, but I trust in your prudence for extricating you from the difficulties; and, in all events, you have courage to despise the clamour of bigots.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your most obedient and most humble Servant,
David Hume."

Some weeks afterwards I had the melancholy pleasure of seeing Mr. Hume in his passage through London; his body feeble, his mind firm. On the 25th of August of the same year (1776) he died, at Edinburgh, the death of a philosopher.[1]

My second excursion to Paris was determined by the pressing invitation of M. and Madame Necker, who had visited England in the preceding summer.[2] On my arrival I found M. Necker Director-general of the finances, in the first bloom of power and popularity. His private fortune enabled him to support a liberal establishment, and his wife, whose talents and virtues I had long admired, was admirably qualified to preside in the conversation of her table and

[1] [For Adam Smith's account of his death see Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, Preface, p. 34. See also Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 153. To call Hume a philosopher was indeed high praise, for Gibbon says of one of the Greek Emperors, that "he pronounced with truth that a prince and a philosopher are the two most eminent characters of human society" (*The Decline*, vi., 457).]

[2] ["London, May 20, 1776. At present I am very busy with the Neckers. I live with her just as I used to do twenty years ago [*ante*, p. 106], laugh at her Paris varnish, and oblige her to become a simple reasonable Suissesse" (*Corres.*, i., 282). He arrived in Paris on May 10, 1777, and returned to London on Nov. 3 (*ib.*, i., 311, 321). His step-mother, he wrote, "started two very ingenious objections" to his journey. "1st, that I shall be confined, or put to death, by the priests, and 2ndly, that I shall sully my *moral* character by making love to Necker's wife" (*ib.*, i., 305). For his reassuring reply to Mrs. Gibbon see *ib.*, p. 306.]

drawing-room. As their friend, I was introduced to the best company of both sexes; to the foreign ministers of all nations, and to the first names and characters of France; who distinguished me by such marks of civility and kindness, as gratitude will not suffer me to forget, and modesty will not allow me to enumerate.[1] The fashionable suppers often broke into the morning hours[2]; yet I occasionally consulted the Royal Library, and that of the Abbey of St. Germain, and in the free use of their books at home I had always reason to praise the liberality of those institutions. The society of men of letters I neither courted nor declined; but I was happy in the acquaintance of M. de Buffon, who united with a sublime genius the most amiable simplicity of mind and manners.[3] At the table of my old friend, M. de Foncemagne,[4] I was involved in a dispute with the Abbé de Mably; and his jealous irascible spirit revenged itself on a work which he was incapable of reading in the original.[5]

As I might be partial in my own cause, I shall transcribe the words of an unknown critic,[6] observing only, that this dispute had been preceded by another on the English constitution, at the house of the Countess de Froulay, an old Jansenist lady.

"Vous étiez chez M. de Foncemagne, mon cher Théodon, le jour que M. l'Abbé de Mably et M. Gibbon y dinèrent en grande compagnie. La conversation roula presque entièrement sur l'histoire. L'Abbé étant un profond politique, la tourna sur l'administration, quand on fut au dessert : et comme par

[1] [See Appendix 37.]

[2] ["Paris, June 16, 1777. After decking myself out with silks and silver, the ordinary establishment of coach, lodging, servants, eating and pocket expenses does not exceed sixty pounds per month. Yet I have two footmen in handsome liveries behind my coach, and my apartment is hung with damask" (*Corres.*, i., 313).

"Aug. 11. To the great admiration of the French, I regularly dine and regularly sup, drink a dish of strong coffee after each meal, and find my stomach a Citizen of the World" (*ib.*, p. 318).]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 152.] [4] [*Ib.*, p. 153.] [5] [See Appendix 38.]

[6] ["Cette réfutation de la *Manière d'écrire l'Histoire*, par l'abbé de Mably, est de M. Gudin de La Brenellerie. . . . C'est au jeune Théodon, l'un des interlocuteurs de l'Entretien de l'abbé de Mably, que sont adressées toutes les critiques que l'on fait sur les principes de son maitre" (*Mémoires de Grimm*, ed. 1814, vi., 138).]

caractère, par humeur, par l'habitude d'admirer Tite Live, il ne prise que le systême républicain, il se mit à vanter l'excellence des républiques ; bien persuadé que le savant Anglois l'approuveroit en tout, et admireroit la profondeur de génie qui avoit fait deviner tous ces avantages à un François. Mais M. Gibbon, instruit par l'expérience des inconvéniens d'un gouvernement populaire, ne fut point du tout de son avis, et il prit généreusement la défense du gouvernement monarchique. L'Abbé voulut le convaincre par Tite Live, et par quelques argumens tirés de Plutarque en faveur des Spartiates. M. Gibbon, doué de la mémoire la plus heureuse, et ayant tous les faits présens à la pensée, domina bientôt la conversation ; l'Abbé se facha, il s'emporta, il dit des choses dures ; l'Anglois, conservant le phlegme de son pays, prenoit ses avantages, et pressoit l'Abbé avec d'autant plus de succès que la colère le troubloit de plus en plus. La conversation s'échauffoit, et M. de Foncemagne la rompit en se levant de table, et en passant dans le salon, où personne ne fut tenté de la renouer." (*Supplément à la Manière d'écrire l'Histoire*, p. 125, &c.)

Nearly two years had elapsêd between the publication of my first and the commencement of my second volume ; and the causes must be assigned of this long delay. 1. After a short holiday, I indulged my curiosity in some studies of a very different nature, a course of anatomy, which was demonstrated by Doctor Hunter [1] ; and some lessons of chemistry,[2]

[1] [In the spring of 1777 Gibbon was attending these lectures two hours every day (*Corres.*, i., 304). Horace Walpole wrote on Nov. 1, 1770 (*Letters*, vii., 456) : " Dr. Hunter had the impudence t'other day to pour out at his Anatomic lecture a more outrageous Smeltiad than Smelt himself, and imputed all our disgraces and ruin to the Opposition. Burke was present, and said he had heard of Political Arithmetic, but never before of Political Anatomy."

Leonard Smelt was sub-governor to the Prince of Wales. *The Political Arithmetic* is the title of a work by Sir William Petty.]

[2] [The study of chemistry was popular at this time. Watson, lecturing at Cambridge (1766-69), had crowded audiences " of persons of all ages and degrees in the University " (*Life of Bishop Watson*, i., 46, 53). Dr. Thomas Beddoes " was made Chemistry Reader at Oxford in 1791, attracting, he says, the largest class assembled in Oxford since the thirteenth century " (MacLeane's *Pembroke College*, p. 392). Chemistry was still in its infancy. Nevertheless Gibbon laments " that it should not yet be reduced to a state of *fixity* " (*Auto.*, p. 317, *n.*). He italicises *fixity*, as he is using a chemical term.]

which were delivered by Mr. Higgins. The principles of these sciences, and a taste for books of natural history, contributed to multiply my ideas and images; and the anatomist and chemist may sometimes track me in their own snow.[1] 2. I dived, perhaps too deeply, into the mud of the Arian controversy; and many days of reading, thinking, and writing were consumed in the pursuit of a phantom.[2] 3. It is difficult to arrange, with order and perspicuity, the various transactions of the age of Constantine; and so much was I displeased with the first essay, that I committed to the flames above fifty sheets. 4. The six months of Paris and pleasure must be deducted from the account. But when I resumed my task I felt my improvement; I was now master of my style and subject, and while the measure of my daily performance was enlarged, I discovered less reason to cancel or correct. It has always been my practice to cast a long paragraph in a single mould, to try it by my ear, to deposit it in my memory, but to suspend the action of the pen till I had given the last polish to my work.[3] Shall I add, that I never found my mind more vigorous, nor my composition more happy, than in the winter hurry of society and parliament?

Had I believed that the majority of English readers were so fondly attached even to the name and shadow of Christianity[4]; had I foreseen that the pious, the timid, and the

[1] ["He [Ben Jonson] was not only a professed imitator of Horace, but a learned plagiary of all the others; you track him everywhere in their snow" (Dryden's *Works*, ed. 1892, xv., 300).]

[2] [In ch. xxi. Horace Walpole (*Letters*, ix., 127) wrote of a controversy described in ch. xlvii: "So far from being Catholic or heretic, I wished Mr. Gibbon had never heard of Monophysites, Nestorians, or any such fools!" Cardinal Newman, in his *History of my Religious Opinions*, ed. 1865, p. 114, tells how in the year 1839 he was "seriously alarmed" by the discovery that he was himself a Monophysite.]

[3] ["Of composition there are different methods. Some employ at once memory and invention, and with little intermediate use of the pen form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only when, in their own opinion, they have completed them" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 321; see *post*, pp. 225, 245).]

[4] [Gibbon had trusted to that "fanatical animosity against Christianity," writes Mackintosh, "which was so prevalent during the latter part of the eighteenth century" (*Life of Mackintosh*, i., 245).

prudent, would feel, or affect to feel, with such exquisite sensibility; I might, perhaps, have softened the two invidious chapters, which would create many enemies, and conciliate few friends. But the shaft was shot, the alarm was sounded, and I could only rejoice, that if the voice of our priests was clamorous and bitter, their hands were disarmed from the powers of persecution. I adhered to the wise resolution of trusting myself and my writings to the candour of the public, till Mr. Davies of Oxford presumed to attack, not the faith, but the fidelity, of the historian.[1] *My Vindication,* expressive of less anger than contempt, amused for a moment the busy and idle metropolis[2]; and the most rational part of the laity, and even of the clergy, appear to have been satisfied of my innocence and accuracy. I would not print this Vindication in quarto, lest it should be bound and preserved with the History itself.[3] At the distance of twelve years, I calmly affirm my judgment of Davies, Chelsum, &c. A victory over such antagonists was a sufficient humiliation.[4] They, however, were rewarded in this world. Poor Chelsum was indeed neglected; and I dare not boast the making Dr. Watson a

"In speaking of the 15th and 16th chapters Grote thought that they had been unfairly condemned, in so far as hostility to Christian tradition went. He regarded these chapters as falling under the legitimate treatment of an historical pen, and nothing further. And had they been written at the present day [1868] far less fuss would have been made about their mischievous tendency" (*Life of Grote*, ed. 1873, p. 296).]

[1] [For Davies, Chelsum, Watson, Apthorpe, Taylor, Milner, Priestley and White see Appendix 39.]

[2] [For Gibbon's *Vindication* see Appendix 40.]

[3] [His *Vindication* he thus concludes: "I am impatient to dismiss, and to dismiss FOR EVER, this odious controversy, with the success of which I cannot surely be elated; and I have only to request that, as soon as my readers are convinced of my innocence, they would forget my *Vindication*" (*ib.*, iv., 648).

"Why then, let me ask," writes Parr, "was that *Vindication* republished by the noble Editor?" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 577.)]

[4] [Pattison, in his *Essay on Religious Thought in England*, writing of "the supply of evidences [of Christianity] in what for the sake of a name may be called the Georgian period (1750-1830)" continues: "The historical investigation, indeed, of the *Origines* of Christianity is a study scarcely second in importance to a philosophical arrangement of its doctrines. But for a genuine inquiry of this nature the English writers of the period had neither the taste nor the knowledge. Gibbon alone approached the true difficulties, but met only with opponents, 'victory over whom was a sufficient humiliation'" (Pattison's *Essays*, ii., 49).]

bishop; he is a prelate of a large mind and liberal spirit: but I enjoyed the pleasure of giving a Royal pension to Mr. Davies, and of collating Dr. Apthorpe to an archiepiscopal living. Their success encouraged the zeal of Taylor the Arian, and Milner the Methodist, with many others, whom it would be difficult to remember, and tedious to rehearse. The list of my adversaries, however, was graced with the more respectable names of Dr. Priestley, Sir David Dalrymple, and Dr. White; and every polemic, of either university, discharged his sermon or pamphlet against the impenetrable silence of the Roman historian. In his *History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, Dr. Priestley threw down his two gauntlets to Bishop Hurd and Mr. Gibbon. I declined the challenge in a letter exhorting my opponent to enlighten the world by his philosophical discoveries, and to remember that the merit of his predecessor Servetus is now reduced to a single passage, which indicates the smaller circulation of the blood through the lungs, from and to the heart.[1] Instead of listening to this friendly advice, the dauntless philosopher of Birmingham continues to fire away his double battery against those who believe too little, and those who believe too much. *From my* replies he has nothing to hope or fear: but his Socinian shield has repeatedly been pierced by the spear of the mighty Horsley,[2] and his trumpet of sedition[3] may at length awaken the magistrates of a free country.

[1] *Astruc de la Structure du Cœur*, i., 77, 79.—GIBBON. [This work is not in the British Museum. C. E. Jordan, in his *Histoire d'un Voyage Littéraire*, Hague, 1735, p. 170, who in 1733 found all Servetus's works in the library of Dr. Mead (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 355, *n.*), writes: "On prétend trouver la circulation du sang dans son *Restitutio Christianismi*". Jordan, after quoting the passage, says "qu'il ne paraît pas, par ce passage, d'une manière fort claire, qu'il ait connu le secret de la circulation du sang. L'amour que nous avons pour les Anciens fait que nous croïons tout trouver chez eux. L'on croit voir le système de la circulation du sang dans Ciceron. Voyez la page 1100 *De Natura Deorum*, de l'édition de Verburg."]

[2] [In the first edition, "by the spear of Horsley"; in the second, "by the mighty spear of Horsley". For Horsley see Appendix 41.]

[3] ["When the public peace was distracted by heresy and schism, the sacred orators sounded the trumpet of discord, and perhaps of sedition" (*The Decline*, ii., 327).

George III. said of Lord Chatham in 1775: "When decrepitude or death puts an end to him as a trumpet of sedition," etc. (I have mislaid the reference.)]

The profession and rank of Sir David Dalrymple (now a Lord of Session [1]) have given a more decent colour to his style. But he scrutinizes each separate passage of the two chapters with the dry minuteness of a special pleader; and as he is always solicitous to make, he may have succeeded sometimes in finding a flaw.[2] In his Annals of Scotland, he has shown himself a diligent collector and an accurate critic.[3]

I have praised, and I still praise, the eloquent sermons which were preached in St. Mary's pulpit at Oxford by Dr. White. If he assaulted me with some degree of illiberal acrimony, in such a place, and before such an audience, he was obliged to speak the language of the country. I smiled at a passage in one of his private letters to Mr. Badcock; "The part where we encounter Gibbon must be brilliant and striking".

In a sermon preached before the university of Cambridge,[4] Dr. Edwards complimented a work, "which can perish only with the language itself"; and esteems the author a formidable enemy. He is, indeed, astonished that more learning and ingenuity has not been shown in the defence of Israel; that the prelates and dignitaries of the church (alas, good man!) did not vie with each other, whose stone should sink the deepest in the forehead of this Goliah.[5]

"But the force of truth will oblige us to confess, that in the attacks which have been levelled against our sceptical historian, we can discover but slender traces of profound and exquisite erudition, of solid criticism and accurate investigation; but we are too frequently disgusted by vague and

[1] [The Lords of Session are the Judges of Scotland. Sir David Dalrymple is better known to the readers of Boswell as Lord Hailes.]

[2] [He published in 1786 *An Inquiry into the Secondary Causes which Mr. Gibbon has assigned for the rapid growth of Christianity.*]

[3] [See Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 404, for Johnson's praise of their exactness.]

[4] [*The Jewish and Heathen Rejection of the Christian Miracles.* Preached before the University of Cambridge, March 7, 1790. By Thomas Edwards, LL.D.]

[5] [Goliath.]

inconclusive reasoning; by unseasonable banter and senseless witticisms; by imbittered bigotry and enthusiastic jargon; by futile cavils and illiberal invectives. Proud and elated by the weakness of his antagonists, he condescends not to handle the sword of controversy." [1]

Let me frankly own that I was startled at the first discharge of ecclesiastical ordnance; but as soon as I found that this empty noise was mischievous only in the intention, my fear was converted into indignation; and every feeling of indignation or curiosity has long since subsided in pure and placid indifference.[2]

The prosecution of my History was soon afterwards checked by another controversy of a very different kind. At the request of the Lord Chancellor,[3] and of Lord Weymouth,[4] then Secretary of State, I vindicated, against the French manifesto,[5] the justice of the British arms. The whole correspondence of Lord Stormont,[6] our late ambassador at Paris, was submitted to my inspection, and the *Mémoire Justificatif*, which I composed in French, was first approved by the Cabinet Ministers, and then delivered as a State paper to the Courts of Europe.[7] The style and manner are praised

[1] [The passage continues: "but darts forth the envenomed shafts of sarcastic ridicule: he approaches indeed the camp, and *defies the armies of the living God;* yet he approaches not like Goliah [Goliath], to call forth a champion, but to insult and triumph over his vanquished enemies" (*Monthly Review*, Oct. 1790, p. 237).]

[2] [For a list of the principal replies to Gibbon see *The Decline*, ed. Milman, ed. 1854, i., 107.

"Mr. Gibbon retained his resentments more stedfastly, and felt them more painfully, than his discretion or his pride would suffer him to acknowledge. The softness of his expressions often gave a sharper edge to the severity of his invectives, and the gaiety of ridicule is often employed by him, not as a check but as a disguise to the fierceness of anger" (Parr's *Works*, ii., 575).]

[3] [Lord Thurlow.] [4] [First Marquis of Bath.]

[5] [A translation of it is published in the *Annual Register* for 1779, i., 390.]

[6] [On Oct. 27, 1779, he was made Secretary of State. In 1793 he succeeded his uncle as second Earl of Mansfield.]

[7] [Gibbon dates it May, 1779 (*Auto.*, p. 319). It is published in the original in Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, v., 1, and as a translation in the *Annual Register* for 1779, i., 397).

Lord Sheffield writes that Gibbon spoke to him of it "with some pleasure, observing that it had been translated even into the Turkish language" (*Misc. Works*, preface, p. 19).

According to Jeremy Bentham, his friend John Lind "got an order to draw

by Beaumarchais himself, who, in his private quarrel, attempted a reply[1]; but he flatters me, by ascribing the memoir to Lord Stormont[2]; and the grossness of his invective betrays the loss of temper and of wit; he acknowledged, that *le style ne serait pas sans grâce, ni la logique sans justesse,* etc., if the facts were true which he undertakes to disprove.[3] For these facts my credit is not pledged; I spoke as a lawyer from my brief, but the veracity of Beaumarchais may be estimated from the assertion that France, by the treaty of Paris (1763) was limited to a certain number of ships of war. On the application of the Duke of Choiseul, he was obliged to retract this daring falsehood.[4]

Among the honourable connections which I had formed, I may justly be proud of the friendship of Mr. Wedderburne, at that time Attorney-General, who now illustrates the title of Lord Loughborough, and the office of Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.[5] By his strong recommendation, and the

up a declaration against the revolted colonies. There were two such declarations. Gibbon drew up the other. Lind for his *Manifesto* got £50 a year for each of his sisters. It was not well done" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 55).]

[1] [Beaumarchais and his partners were charged with despatching to America in January 1777, when we were still at peace with France, nine large ships laden with arms (Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, v., 18). He gloried in what he had done (*Œuvres de Beaumarchais*, ed. 1809, v., 20, 24).]

[2] [*Ib.*, p. 2.]

[3] [Beaumarchais begins by saying that during Lord Stormont's residence at Paris the American deputies, whenever any false report was circulated, used to say: "Ne croyez par cela, Monsieur, *c'est du Stormont tout pur*". He continues that the style, "bien qu'un peu traînant dans la traduction, ne manquerait pas de grâces, ni la logique de justesse, si l'écrivain," etc. (*ib.*, p. 43).]

[4] [The statement does not appear in his *Observations* as published in his collected works. Anthony Storer wrote to W. Eden on Nov. 29, 1787: "The French are now paying for the American war, which Necker told Gibbon had cost them seventy-one millions sterling" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 449). This waste of treasure hurried on and intensified the French Revolution.]

[5] [He was made Lord Chancellor in 1793, and Earl of Rosslyn in 1801. "I know nothing of Pitt as a war minister," wrote Gibbon in 1793, "but it affords me much satisfaction that the intrepid wisdom of the new Chancellor is introduced into the Cabinet" (*Corres.*, ii., 371). Horace Walpole (*Letters*, vii., 506), writing on Jan. 27, 1781, of the new volume of *The Decline*, says: "There is flattery to the Scots that would choke anything but Scots, who can gobble feathers as readily as thistles. David Hume and Adam Smith are *legislators* and sages, but the homage is intended for his patron, Lord Loughborough." The references are to *The Decline*, ii., 483; iii., 44. See also *ib.*, vi., 311; vii.,

favourable disposition of Lord North, I was appointed one of the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations [1]; and my private income was enlarged by a clear addition of between seven and eight hundred pounds a year. The fancy of an hostile orator may paint, in the strong colours of ridicule, "the perpetual virtual adjournment, and the unbroken sitting vacation of the Board of Trade".[2] But it must be allowed that our duty was not intolerably severe, and that I enjoyed many days and weeks of repose, without being called away from my library to the office. My acceptance of a place provoked some of the leaders of opposition, with whom I had lived in habits of intimacy; and I was most unjustly accused of deserting a party, in which I had never enlisted.[3]

The aspect of the next session of parliament was stormy and perilous; county meetings, petitions, and committees of correspondence, announced the public discontent [4]; and instead of voting with a triumphant majority, the friends of government were often exposed to a struggle, and sometimes to a defeat. The House of Commons adopted Mr. Dunning's motion, "That the influence of the Crown had increased, was

215. In another passage (vi., 320) Gibbon describes Loughborough as "a learned Lord, who, with an accurate and discerning eye, has surveyed the philosophic history of law. By his studies posterity might be enriched; the merit of the orator and the judge can be *felt* only by his contemporaries."

Wedderburne's "skilful eloquence" did much to turn Benjamin Franklin into one of the bitterest enemies of that country which he had been wont to speak of as "home" (*Letters of Hume to Strahan*, p. 226). Johnson spoke of him and John Home as two Scotchmen whom "Lord Bute had to go on errands for him" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 354). When the news came to Windsor Castle of his death "the King inquired again and again whether it might not be a false report. When assured that there could be no mistake about it, His Majesty felt free to exclaim, 'Then he has not left a greater knave behind him in my dominions'" (Stanhope's *Pitt*, iv., 251). For an instance of his knavery see *ib.*, iii., 264-271. See also *ante*, p. 193, and *post*, p. 261, *n.*]

[1] [Gibbon informed his step-mother of the appointment on July 3, 1779 (*Corres*, i., 366). According to the *Parl. Hist.*, xviii., 7 (which must be mistaken), the new writ on his taking office was issued on June 3.]

[2] [See Appendix 42.] [3] [*Ib.*, 43.]

[4] ["The business of public meetings, of petitions to parliament, and of associations for the redress of grievances, was commenced during the [Christmas] recess." Yorkshire and Middlesex led the way. In each of these counties "a committee of correspondence and association" was appointed. Their example was soon followed by other counties (*Annual Register*, 1780, i., 85).]

increasing, and ought to be diminished,"[1] and Mr. Burke's bill of reform was framed with skill, introduced with eloquence, and supported by numbers. Our late president, the American Secretary of State, very narrowly escaped the sentence of proscription; but the unfortunate Board of Trade was abolished in the committee by a small majority (207 to 199) of eight votes. The storm, however, blew over for a time; a large defection of country gentlemen eluded the sanguine hopes of the patriots: the Lords of Trade were revived; administration recovered their strength and spirit; and the flames of London, which were kindled by a mischievous madman,[2] admonished all thinking men of the danger of an appeal to the people. In the premature dissolution which followed this session of parliament I lost my seat.[3] Mr. Elliot was now deeply engaged in the measures of opposition, and the electors

[1][On April 6, 1780—"a day," wrote Horace Walpole (*Letters*, vii., 345), "that ought for ever to be a red-lettered day"—Dunning made this motion. It was carried by 233 to 215 (*Parl. Hist.*, xxi., 340-67). On May 7, 1783, Pitt asserted in the House "that a secret influence of the Crown was sapping the very foundation of liberty by corruption. . . . The House had been base enough to feed the influence that enslaved its members, and thus was at one time the parent and the offspring of corruption" (*ib.*, xxiii., 830).

Wilberforce in his *Sketch of Pitt* lamented that Pitt, when in 1783 he first became Prime Minister, "had not generously resolved to govern his country by principle rather than by influence" (*Private Papers of W. Wilberforce*, p. 73). For Fox's attack on influence and on Pitt on Dec. 17, 1783, see *Parl. Hist.*, xxiv., 206-20. "For God's sake," he said, "strangle us not in the very moment we look for success and triumph by an infamous string of bedchamber janissaries" (*ib.*, p. 220).]

[2][Lord George Gordon. The riots which bear his name began on June 2, and through the incredible weakness of the Ministers lasted nearly a week (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 428; *Letters of Johnson*, ii., 166). On June 27 Gibbon had the audacity to write: "The measures of government have been seasonable and vigorous" (*Corres*, i., 382). "Lord North," said the King, "was actuated in every instance by a desire of present ease at the risk of any future difficulty. This he instanced in the American War and in the riots of 1780" (Russell's *Life of Fox*, ed. 1866, ii., 5).

"It was industriously circulated that the Opposition were the secret authors of the late riots." A nobleman, it was reported, had been killed among the rioters and his body thrown into the Thames to prevent discovery. It was with astonishment that he was beheld in the House of Peers the following winter. "Popular fury seemed the greatest of all possible evils. And administration gathered power from a tumult which appeared to threaten the subversion of all government" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1780, i., 200; 1781, i., 137-38, 140).]

[3][The dissolution on Sept. 1, 1780, came "like a thunder-clap" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1781, i., 141).]

of Leskeard are commonly of the same opinion as Mr. Elliot.[1]

In this interval of my senatorial life, I published the second and third volumes of the Decline and Fall.[2] My ecclesiastical history still breathed the same spirit of freedom; but Protestant zeal is more indifferent to the characters and controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries. My obstinate silence had damped the ardour of the polemics. Dr. Watson, the most candid of my adversaries, assured me that he had no thoughts of renewing the attack, and my impartial balance of the virtues and vices of Julian was generally praised.[3] This truce was interrupted only by some animadversions of the Catholics of Italy, and by some angry letters from Mr. Travis, who made me personally responsible for condemning, with the best critics, the spurious text of the three heavenly witnesses.

[1] [The electors, it seems probable, were only brought over to his opinion at a cost of £2,400 each election (*Corres.*, i., 228).

Mr. W. P. Courtney, writing of the representation of Liskeard, says: "Then [1722] one of the house of Eliot, of Port Eliot, appeared upon the scene, the earliest evidence of a connection which lasted uninterruptedly, though not without an occasional struggle for emancipation, until 1832" (*Parl. Representation of Cornwall*, p. 258).

Bentham, who met Eliot at Bowood (Lord Shelburne's seat) in the summer of 1781, described him as "modest enough in his conversation about politics, but desponding. He says he scarce ever looks into a paper, nor dares he, for fear of ill news. . . . He brought in seven members the last time. Gibbon he brought in for private friendship; though, as it turned out, much to his regret" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 96, 101). In the division on Dunning's motion, Gibbon voted with the Government in the minority, while Eliot and Samuel Salt, Gibbon's fellow-member for Liskeard, were in the majority (*Parl. Hist.*, xxi., 368).

Gibbon had the impudence to write: "Mr. Elliot, actuated, as it should seem, by the Demon of Party, has renounced me" (*Corres.*, i., 386). Eliot supported Shelburne and Pitt against the Coalition Ministry (see *post*, p. 214).]

[2] [They were published on March 1, 1781 (*Corres.*, i., 396). On Feb. 1, 1780, Strahan and Cadell published as a frontispiece to the quarto edition an engraving by Hall of Reynolds's portrait of Gibbon, with the superscription: "Edward Gibbon Esqr. born the 8th May, 1737". According to Lord Sheffield, "by far the best likeness of him that exists is that painted by Mr. Warton in 1774, before he became very corpulent" (*Misc. Works*, Preface, p. 11). For an engraving from it see *ib.*, frontispiece.]

[3] [Dr. Robertson wrote to him about Julian: "I am much struck with the felicity wherewith you have described that odd infusion of Heathen fanaticism and philosophical coxcombry which mingled with the great qualities of a hero and a genius" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 250).]

The piety or prudence of my Italian translator has provided an antidote against the poison of his original.[1] The 5th and 7th volumes are armed with five letters from an anonymous divine to his friends, Foothead and Kirk, two English students at Rome: and this meritorious service is commended by Monsignore Stonor, a prelate of the same nation, who discovers much venom in the *fluid* and nervous style of Gibbon.[2] The critical essay at the end of the third volume was furnished by the Abbate Nicola Spedalieri, whose zeal has gradually swelled to a more solid confutation in two quarto volumes.—Shall I be excused for not having read them?

The brutal insolence of Mr. Travis's challenge can only be excused by the absence of learning, judgment, and humanity; and to that excuse he has the fairest or foulest pretension.[3] Compared with Archdeacon Travis, Chelsum and Davies assume the title of respectable enemies.

The bigoted advocate of popes and monks may be turned over even to the bigots of Oxford; and the wretched Travis still smarts under the lash of the merciless Porson. I consider Mr. Porson's answer to Archdeacon Travis as the most acute and accurate piece of criticism which has appeared since the days of Bentley. His strictures are founded in argument, enriched with learning, and enlivened with wit; and his adversary neither deserves nor finds any quarter at his hands. The evidence of the three heavenly witnesses would now be rejected in any court of justice: but prejudice is blind, authority is deaf, and our vulgar bibles will ever

[1] [Nine volumes of the Italian translation, to the end of ch. xxxviii., were published at Pisa in 1779-86. A tenth volume was printed, but not published, and was afterwards destroyed (see MS. entry in vol. i. of the copy in the Brit. Mus.). It has Gibbon's bookplate and was bought at Lausanne about 1855. A complete edition was published at Milan in 1821-24. Dean Milman could never get sight of the Italian translation (*The Decline*, ed. 1854, i., 109, *n.*).]

[2] [On June 12, 1784, Kirk wrote to the anonymous divine: "Monsig. Stonor approves of your having published a precaution, that heedless readers may not be deceived with his fluid and nervous style, and with the fame that he has acquired" (*Istoria della Decadenza*, etc., ed. 1783, vii., 202).]

[3] [See Appendix 44.]

be polluted by this spurious text, "*sedet æternumque sedebit*[1]." The more learned ecclesiastics will indeed have the secret satisfaction of reprobating in the closet what they read in the church.

I perceived, and without surprise, the coldness and even prejudice of the town; nor could a whisper escape my ear, that, in the judgment of many readers, my continuation was much inferior to the original attempts.[2] An author who cannot ascend will always appear to sink: envy was now prepared for my reception, and the zeal of my religious, was fortified by the motive of my political, enemies.[3] Bishop Newton, in writing his own life, was at full liberty to declare how much he himself and two eminent brethren were disgusted by Mr. G.'s prolixity, tediousness, and affectation. But the old man should not have indulged his zeal in a false and feeble charge against the historian,[4] who had faithfully and even cautiously rendered Dr. Burnet's[5] meaning by the alternative "of sleep or repose". That philosophic divine supposes, that, in the period between death and the resurrection, human souls exist without a body, endowed with internal consciousness, but destitute of all active or passive connection with the external world. "Secundum communem dictionem sacræ scripturæ, mors dicitur *somnus*, et morientes dicuntur *abdormire*, quod innuere mihi videtur statum mortis esse statum quietis, silentii, et ἀεργασίας" (*De Statû Mortuorum*, ch. v., p. 98 [ed. 1720, p. 96]).

I was however encouraged by some domestic and foreign

[1] [*Æneid*, vi., 617.
"Is fixed by Fate on his eternal chair."
(Dryden.)
For the disappearance of this pollution see Appendix 44].

[2] [Horace Walpole wrote of the second and third volumes: "Though these volumes are not polished like the first, you see that he is never thinking of his subject, but intending to make his periods worthy of himself. . . . I was charmed, as I owned, with the enamel of the first volume, but I am tired by this rhetorical diction, and wish again for Bishop Burnet's *And so*" (Walpole's *Letters*, viii., 15).]

[3] ["The patriots," Gibbon wrote, "wish to damn the work and the author" (*Corres.*, i., 398).]

[4] [See Appendix 45.]

[5] [Thomas Burnet.]

testimonies of applause; and the second and third volumes insensibly rose in sale and reputation to a level with the first. But the public is seldom wrong; and I am inclined to believe that, especially in the beginning, they are more prolix and less entertaining than the first; my efforts had not been relaxed by success, and I had rather deviated into the opposite fault of minute and superfluous diligence. On the Continent, my name and writings were slowly diffused; a French translation of the first volume had disappointed the booksellers of Paris[1]; and a passage in the third was construed as a personal reflection on the reigning monarch.[2]

Before I could apply for a seat at the general election the list was already full; but Lord North's promise was sincere, his recommendation was effectual, and I was soon chosen on a vacancy for the borough of Lymington, in Hampshire.[3] In the first session of the new parliament, administration stood their ground; their final overthrow was reserved for the second. The American war had once been the favourite of the country: the pride of England was irritated by the resistance of her colonies, and the executive power was driven

[1] [Gibbon had to pay two guineas and a half postage on the French translation of the first seven chapters sent from Paris (*Corres.*, i., 296). Johnson was charged £7 10s. for a packet by the post from Lisbon (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 22).]

[2] It may not be generally known that Louis XVI. is a great reader, and a reader of English books. On perusing a passage of my History which seems to compare him to Arcadius or Honorius, he expressed his resentment to the Prince of B——, from whom the intelligence was conveyed to me. I shall neither disclaim the allusion, nor examine the likeness; but the situation of the *late* King of France excludes all suspicion of flattery; and I am ready to declare that the concluding observations of my third volume were written before his accession to the throne.—GIBBON.

[The Memoir in which this note occurs is dated March 2, 1791. By that time Louis XVI. was merely a king in name. He ascended the throne on May 10, 1774, nearly seven years before the publication of the third volume. The following is the passage which excited his resentment: "Europe is now divided into twelve powerful, though unequal, kingdoms, three respectable commonwealths, and a variety of smaller, though independent, states: the chances of royal and ministerial talents are multiplied, at least with the number of its rulers; and a Julian or Semiramis may reign in the North, while Arcadius and Honorius again slumber on the thrones of the House of Bourbon". In a later edition, as Professor Bury points out, Gibbon altered "House of Bourbon" into "South" (*The Decline*, iv., 165, 529). Four pages after this attack on the Bourbons he ended the first half of the History by a compliment to George III.]

[3] [He was chosen at the end of June, 1781 (*Corres.*, ii., 1).]

by national clamour into the most vigorous and coercive measures.[1] But the length of a fruitless contest, the loss of armies, the accumulation of debt and taxes, and the hostile confederacy of France, Spain, and Holland, indisposed the public to the American war, and the persons by whom it was conducted; the representatives of the people, followed, at a slow distance, the changes of their opinion, and the ministers who refused to bend, were broken by the tempest. As soon as Lord North had lost, or was about to lose, a majority in the House of Commons, he surrendered his office, and retired to a private station, with the tranquil assurance of a clear conscience and a cheerful temper: the old fabric was dissolved, and the posts of government were occupied by the victorious and veteran troops of opposition.[2] The Lords of Trade were not immediately dismissed, but the Board itself was abolished by Mr. Burke's bill, which decency had compelled the patriots[3] to revive[4]; and I was stripped of a convenient salary, after having enjoyed it about three years.

So flexible is the title of my History, that the final æra might be fixed at my own choice; and I long hesitated whether I should be content with the three volumes, the fall of the Western empire, which fulfilled my first engagement with the public. In this interval of suspense, nearly a

[1] [See Appendix 46.]

[2] [Grimm (*Mémoires*, ed. 1814, v., 328) points out that in the Rockingham Ministry which followed Lord North's there were four descendants of Henry IV. of France: the Duke of Grafton, Lord Privy Seal; Charles Fox, Secretary of State; the Duke of Richmond, Master of the Ordnance; and Admiral Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty.]

[3] [Gibbon wrote on Jan. 7, 1779: "I do assure you that I have not any claims to the injurious epithet of 'a patriot'" (*Corres.*, i., 354). For "patriot" see Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 87.]

[4] [This is a placeman's sneer. In the great distress of his country Gibbon had received £750 a year for almost nominal services (*Corres.*, ii., 36). "The annual saving, which would be yearly increasing," effected by Burke's bill was £72,000; £12,600 of which was due to the abolition of the Board of Trade (*Parl. Hist.*, xxii., 1412; *Ann. Reg.*, 1782, i., 180; *Rockingham Memoirs*, ii., 399). See also *ante*, p. 208, and *post*, p. 215).

Pitt revived the Board in 1786, putting at the head of it Charles Jenkinson (Lord Hawkesbury, afterwards first Earl of Liverpool), "the King's friend," the leader of "the reptiles who burrow under the throne," to use Fox's words (*Parl. Hist.*, xxiv., 217). Pitt, however, abolished many sinecures (Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 306; iv., 416; *Ann. Reg.*, 1786, i., 219).]

twelvemonth, I returned by a natural impulse to the Greek authors of antiquity ; I read with new pleasure the Iliad and the Odyssey, the Histories of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, a large portion of the tragic and comic theatre of Athens, and many interesting dialogues of the Socratic school. Yet in the luxury of freedom I began to wish for the daily task, the active pursuit, which gave a value to every book, and an object to every inquiry ; the preface of a new edition announced my design,[1] and I dropped without reluctance from the age of Plato to that of Justinian. The original text of Procopius and Agathias[2] supplied the events and even the characters of his reign : but a laborious winter was devoted to the Codes, the Pandects, and the modern interpreters, before I presumed to form an abstract of the civil law.[3] My skill was improved by practice, my diligence perhaps was quickened by the loss of office ; and, excepting the last chapter, I had finished the fourth volume before I sought a retreat on the banks of the Leman Lake.

It is not the purpose of this narrative to expatiate on the public or secret history of the times : the schism which followed the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, the appointment of the Earl of Shelburne, the resignation of Mr. Fox, and his famous coalition with Lord North.[4] But I may assert, with some degree of assurance, that in their political conflict those great antagonists had never felt any personal animosity to each other,[5] that their reconciliation was easy and sincere, and that their friendship has never been clouded by the shadow of suspicion or jealousy. The most violent or venal of their respective followers embraced this

[1] [The preface was dated March 1, 1782.]

[2] [For Gibbon's character of Procopius see *The Decline*, iv., 210, and for "the false and florid rhetoric" that "Agathias lavished" see *ib.*, iv., 382.]

[3] [For this abstract see *ib.*, ch. 44. In writing the reign of Frederic I. (A.D. 1152-90) Gibbon says: "The recent discovery of the Pandects had renewed a science most favourable to despotism" (*ib.*, v., 303).]

[4] [See Appendix 47.]

[5] ["The style of declamation must never be confounded with the genuine sense which respectable enemies entertain of each other's merits" (*The Decline*, v., 116).]

fair occasion of revolt, but their alliance still commanded a majority in the House of Commons; the peace was censured, Lord Shelburne resigned, and the two friends knelt on the same cushion to take the oath of Secretary of State. From a principle of gratitude I adhered to the coalition: my vote was counted in the day of battle, but I was overlooked in the division of the spoil. There were many claimants more deserving and importunate than myself[1]: the Board of Trade could not be restored; and, while the list of places was curtailed, the number of candidates was doubled.[2] An easy dismission to a secure seat at the Board of Customs or Excise was promised on the first vacancy: but the chance was distant and doubtful[3]; nor could I solicit with much ardour an ignoble servitude, which would have robbed me of the most valuable of my studious hours: at the same time the tumult of London, and the attendance on parliament, were grown more irksome; and, without some additional income, I could not long or prudently maintain the style of expense to which I was accustomed.[4]

[1] [Gibbon, on May 20, 1783, wrote to Deyverdun of Lord North: "Des collègues plus actifs lui enlèvent les morceaux les plus friands, qui sont aussitôt dévorés par la voracité de leurs créatures" (*Corres.*, ii., 37). It never seems to have occurred to him that he was one of Lord North's "créatures". To Dr. Robertson he wrote on Sept. 1: "If the means of patronage had not been so strangely reduced by our modern reformers, I am persuaded Lord Loughborough's constant and liberal kindness would more than satisfy the moderate desires of a philosopher" (Stewart's *Robertson*, p. 364). On May 28, 1784, he wrote: "The reign of pensions and sinecures is at an end" (*Corres.*, ii., 107).

"The reign of pensions and sinecures" was not wholly at an end. In 1802 the Prime Minister, Addington, bestowed the Clerkship of the Pells, a sinecure of £3,000 a year, on his own son, a boy of sixteen. Pitt highly approved of the appointment (Stanhope's *Pitt*, iii., 385). Pitt himself, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, received more than £3,000 a year (*ib.*, iii., 341). He pensioned off his mother's housekeeper by a sinecure post of housekeeper of £40, and later on by a better one of about £150 a year (*ib.*, i., 347; ii., 221). On the other hand in the Customs he abolished eighty-five sinecures (*ib.*, iv., 416).]

[2] [W. Eden wrote to Lord Loughborough on July 24, 1782: "Burke's foolish bill has made it a very difficult task for any set of men either to form or maintain an Administration" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 12).]

[3] [Lord Sheffield wrote to William Eden on June 13, 1783: "Gibbon and I have been walking about the room, and cannot find any employment we should like in the intended establishment [of the Prince of Wales]. He agrees with me that the place of dancing-master might be one of the most eligible for him, but he rather inclines to be painter, in hopes of succeeding Ramsay [as King's Painter]" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 53).]

[4] [See Appendix 48.]

From my early acquaintance with Lausanne I had always cherished a secret wish, that the school of my youth might become the retreat of my declining age.[1] A moderate fortune would secure the blessings of ease, leisure, and independence: the country, the people, the manners, the language, were congenial to my taste; and I might indulge the hope of passing some years in the domestic society of a friend. After travelling with several English,[2] Mr. Deyverdun was now settled at home, in a pleasant habitation, the gift of his deceased aunt[3]: we had long been separated, we had long been silent; yet in my first letter[4] I exposed, with the most perfect confidence, my situation, my sentiments, and my designs. His immediate answer was a warm and joyful acceptance: the picture of our future life provoked my impatience; and the terms of arrangement were short and simple, as he possessed the property, and I undertook the expense of our common house. Before I could break my English chain, it was incumbent on me to struggle with the feelings of my heart, the indolence of my temper, and the opinion of the world, which unanimously condemned this voluntary banishment.[5] In the disposal of my effects, the library, a sacred deposit, was alone excepted[6]: as my post-

[1] ["The beauteous and happy country where I am permitted to reside" (*The Decline*, iv., 495).]

[2] Sir Richard Worsley, Lord Chesterfield, Broderick Lord Middleton, and Mr. Hume, brother to Sir Abraham.—GIBBON. [See *ante*, p. 176.]

[3] [See Read's *Hist. Studies*, i., 7; ii., 297.]

[4] [Dated May 20, 1783 (*Corres.*, ii., 35).]

[5] [Lord Sheffield wrote on Aug. 7, 1783: "Gibbon has baffled all arrangements; possibly you may have heard of a continental scheme. It has annoyed me much; and of all circumstances the most provoking is that he is right; a most pleasant opportunity offered. His seat in Parliament is left in my hands. He is here. In short, his plan is such that it was impossible to urge anything against it" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 56). Lord Sheffield was to find a purchaser of Gibbon's seat for Lymington. Its value depended on the expectation of the duration of the parliament then sitting. The dissolution came before any bargain was completed (*Corres.*, ii., 81, 93, 99, 101).]

[6] [He sent "two immense cases of books" to Lausanne (Stewart's *Robertson*, p. 365). On Aug. 18 he wrote: "This morning my books were shipped for Rouen, and will reach Lausanne almost as soon as myself. On Thursday morning the bulk of the library moves from Bentinck Street to Downing Street (Lord Sheffield's)" (*Corres.*, ii., 62). He reached Lausanne on Sept. 27; but his books "by some strange neglect" did not reach him till February, 1784 (*ib.*, pp. 74, 94, 97).]

chaise moved over Westminster-bridge, I bid a long farewell to the "fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ[1]". My journey by the direct road through France[2] was not attended with any accident, and I arrived at Lausanne nearly twenty years after my second departure. Within less than three months the coalition struck on some hidden rocks: had I remained on board, I should have perished in the general shipwreck.

Since my establishment at Lausanne, more than seven years have elapsed; and if every day has not been equally soft and serene, not a day, not a moment, has occurred in which I have repented of my choice. During my absence, a long portion of human life, many changes had happened: my elder acquaintance had left the stage; virgins were ripened into matrons, and children were grown to the age of manhood. But the same manners were transmitted from one generation to another: my friend alone was an inestimable treasure; my name was not totally forgotten, and all were ambitious to welcome the arrival of a stranger and the return of a fellow-citizen. The first winter was given to a general embrace, without any nice discrimination of persons and characters. After a more regular settlement, a more accurate survey, I discovered three solid and permanent benefits of my new situation. 1. My personal freedom had been somewhat impaired by the House of Commons and the Board of Trade; but I was now delivered from the chain of duty and dependence, from the hopes and fears of political adventure: my sober mind was no longer intoxicated by the fumes of party, and I rejoiced in my escape, as often as I read of the midnight debates which preceded the dissolution of parliament. 2. My English œconomy had been that of a solitary bachelor, who might afford some occasional dinners.[3] In Switzerland I enjoyed at

[1] [Horace, *Odes*, iii., 29, 12.
"Its crowds, and smoke, and opulence, and noise."
(Francis.)
Gibbon left London on Sept. 15 (*Corres.*, ii., 71).]

[2] [He went by the road he had travelled to his banishment thirty years earlier (*ante*, p. 82).]

[3] [Gibbon, writing to Lord Sheffield on Nov. 14, 1783, described him as having "passed the afternoon, the evening, and perhaps the night, without

every meal, at every hour, the free and pleasant conversation of the friend of my youth; and my daily table was always provided for the reception of one or two extraordinary guests.[1] Our importance in society is less a positive than a relative weight: in London I was lost in the crowd; I ranked with the first families of Lausanne, and my style of prudent expense enabled me to maintain a fair balance of reciprocal civilities.[2] 3. Instead of a small house between a street and a stable-yard,[3] I began to occupy a spacious and convenient mansion, connected on the north side with the city, and open

sleep or food, stifled in a close room by the heated respiration of six hundred politicians, inflamed by party and passion, and tired of the repetition of dull nonsense, which, in that illustrious assembly, so far outweighs the proportion of reason and eloquence" (*Corres.*, ii., 80). Six hundred is an exaggeration. There were five hundred and fifty-eight members. In very few divisions four hundred and fifty voted.]

[1] ["Deyverdun, who is somewhat of an Epicurean philosopher, understands the management of a table, and we frequently invite a guest or two to share our luxurious, but not extravagant, repasts" (*ib.*, ii., 78). Gibbon sent to London for a set of Wedgwood China, "adequate to a plentiful table". Off this set General Read dined in 1879 at M. de Sévery's house at Mex, near Lausanne. "It is still in general use. Gibbon's supply of table-linen was so large in quantity and excellent in quality that his tablecloths and napkins are still in use" (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 479).]

[2] [Deyverdun, in 1783, urging Gibbon to settle at Lausanne, wrote: "Vous serez d'abord l'homme à la mode, et je vois d'ici que vous soutiendrez fort bien ce rôle, sans vous en fâcher, dût-on un peu vous surfaire. *Je sens bien que tu me flattes, mais tu me fais plaisir*, est peut-être le meilleur vers de Destouches" (*Corres.*, ii., 43).

Miss Holroyd wrote at Lausanne in 1791: "It is a proof how much pleasure flattery gives the most sensible people. This is the only advantage this place can have over England for Mr. Gibbon. However he is so much attached to the place and the people, that he cannot bear the slightest joke about them" (*Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, p. 63).

Gibbon wrote of a long fit of the gout in 1785: "In London my confinement was sad and solitary; the many forgot my existence when they saw me no longer at Brookes's. . . . I was proud and happy if I could prevail on Elmsley to enliven the dulness of the evening. Here the objects are nearer, and more distinct; and I myself am an object of much larger magnitude. . . . During three months I have had round my chair a succession of agreeable men and women, who came with a smile and vanished at a nod" (*Corres.*, ii., 134).

Malone, one day in 1783, found Dr. Johnson, when confined by illness, roasting apples and reading the *History of Birmingham*. "These," he said, "are some of the solitary expedients to which we are driven by sickness" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 218, *n.*).]

[3] [He spoke very differently of his house (7, Bentinck Street) when he took it. "I am got into the delightful mansion," he wrote to his step-mother. "My own new, clean, comfortable, dear house, which I like better every week I pass in it." "My little palace, which is absolutely the best house in London." "Mine own dear library, and mine own dear parlour" (*Corres.*, i., 179, 181, 183, 269).]

on the south to a beautiful and boundless horizon.[1] A garden of four acres had been laid out by the taste of Mr. Deyverdun: from the garden a rich scenery of meadows and vineyards descends to the Leman Lake, and the prospect far beyond the Lake is crowned by the stupendous mountains of Savoy.[2] My books and my acquaintance had been first united in London; but this happy position of my library in town and country was finally reserved for Lausanne. Possessed of every comfort in this triple alliance, I could not be tempted to change my habitation with the changes of the seasons.[3]

[1] ["The chosen part of my library is now arrived, and arranged in a room full as good as that in Bentinck Street, with this difference indeed, that instead of looking on a stone court twelve feet square, I command, from three windows of plate glass, an unbounded prospect of many a league of vineyard, of fields, of wood, of lake, and of mountains" (*Corres.*, ii., 118).

Of the sight of his books—one of the most delightful sights to a scholar—he intentionally deprived himself. They were hidden away in "twenty-seven bookcases or closets, each with stout wooden doors and strong keys. He could shut the doors, and then appear to be sitting in a room without a single book" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 493). Johnson's garret-library, with its three-legged elbow chair, would have looked more cheerful.]

[2] [See *Corres.*, ii., 142, for an interesting passage where he says that Deyverdun has taught him to "dwell with pleasure on the shape and colour of the leaves, the various hues of the blossoms, and successive progress of vegetation". Brought up as he had mainly been in the country, it is strange that he required to be taught this lesson when he was past fifty.]

[3] [On July 21, 1787, he wrote that in four years he had lain but a single night out of his own bed" (*ib.*, ii., 156).

Mr. Samuel Davey, late of 47, Great Russell Street, kindly allowed me to take a copy of the original of Gibbon's bill with his Lausanne tailor for 1784 and part of 1785. The following are some of the items. The charges are I think in florins and sols. A florin was equal to one French livre and a half according to the statement in D'Haussonville's *Le Salon de Madame Necker*, ii., 232, that Necker paid for Coppet in 1784 "la somme de 500,000 livres argent de France, soit 333,333 florins 6 sols 4 deniers argent de Berne".

"POUR Mr. GUIBONS.

Monsieur Guibons doit à Jean Wisard. F.S.

Pour Façon et fournitures d'une Cullotte de velour cramoisi .	2.10
Une paire de jartieres rouges	1.
¼ Ecarlette pour Col et parements et Col de la redingotte grise	3.
Fourni 1 dzne [douzaine] ½ grands boutons argents . .	3.
Pour avoir redoublé les pans d'une veste, fourni la doublure en soy blanche	1.10
Pour Façon d'un habit de royale	4.
Fournitures	2.
5 au[e] [aunes] royale superfine a 8£ 10sls.	42.10
1 au[e] futaine fine a 25 bald [?]	3.15
1 dzne ½ boutons dorés a 35 bald [?]	5.5
Pour façon et fournitures d'une Culotte tricotée en soy noire .	2.10
Pour Façon et fournitures de deux vestes de bazaine rayé .	4.0."]

My friends had been kindly apprehensive that I should not be able to exist in a Swiss town at the foot of the Alps, after having so long conversed with the first men of the first cities of the world.[1] Such lofty connections may attract the curious and gratify the vain; but I am too modest, or too proud to rate my own value by that of my associates; and whatsoever may be the fame of learning or genius, experience has shown me that the cheaper qualifications of politeness and good sense are of more useful currency in the commerce of life. By many, conversation is esteemed as a theatre or a school: but after the morning has been occupied by the labours of the library, I wish to unbend rather than to exercise my mind[2]; and in the interval between tea and supper I am far from disdaining the innocent amusement of a game at cards.[3] Lausanne is peopled by a numerous gentry, whose companionable idleness is seldom disturbed by the pursuits of avarice or ambition[4]:

[1] [Gibbon wrote to Lady Sheffield on October 22, 1784: "Whenever I used to hint my design of retiring, that illustrious Baron [Sheffield], after a proper effusion of damned fools, condescended to observe that such an obscure nook in Switzerland might please me in the ignorance of youth, but that after tasting for so many years the various society of Paris and London, I should soon be tired with the dull and uniform round of a provincial town" (*Corres.*, ii., 116).]

[2] ["Johnson had all his life habituated himself to consider conversation as a trial of intellectual vigour and skill" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 111). Nevertheless he said that "that is the happiest conversation where there is no competition, no vanity, but a calm quiet interchange of sentiments" (*ib.*, ii., 359).

"Those persons," writes Burke, "who creep into the hearts of most people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their reliefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities, nor strong virtues" (*The Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. 1759, p. 206).]

[3] ["Whist at shillings, or half-crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 342). Writing in 1763 on "un Dimanche de Communion" he says: "Point d'affaires, point d'assemblée; on s'interdit jusqu'au *whist*, si nécessaire à l'existence d'un Lausannois" (*ib.*, i., 171).

General Read was shown by M. de Sévery "Gibbon's counters at whist—eight pieces of silver of Ludwig [? Ludovic] XV., 1731" (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 483).

Mr. Samuel Davey showed me a ten of diamonds, on the back of which—on a ground of plain white—was written:—

"Bon pour Cent Livres
á Blondel
E. Gibbon

£100
Ce 11 Mai, 1786."

Blondel was Gibbon's valet. See *Corres.*, ii., 124, 131.]

[4] [Gibbon, in *The Decline*, i., 222, describes the Pays de Vaud as "a small district on the banks of the Leman Lake, much more distinguished for politeness than for industry".]

the women, though confined to a domestic education, are endowed for the most part with more taste and knowledge than their husbands and brothers [1]; but the decent freedom of both sexes is equally remote from the extremes of simplicity and refinement.[2] I shall add as a misfortune rather than a merit, that the situation and beauty of the Pays de Vaud, the long habits of the English,[3] the medical reputation of Dr. Tissot,[4] and the fashion of viewing the mountains and *Glaciers*, have opened us on all sides to the incursions of foreigners.[5] The visits of Mr. and Madame Necker, of Prince Henry of Prussia, and of Mr. Fox, may form some pleasing exceptions; but, in general, Lausanne has appeared most agreeable in my eyes, when we have been abandoned to our own society. I had frequently seen Mr. Necker, in the summer of 1784, at a country house near Lausanne, where he composed his Treatise on the Administration of the Finances.[6] I have since, in October 1790, visited him in his present residence,

[1] ["Il m'a toujours paru qu'à Lausanne, aussi bien qu'en France, les femmes sont très supérieures aux hommes" (*Corres.*, ii., 46).]

[2] [For the mollifying of the prejudice which, when Gibbon first visited Lausanne, "drew a line of separation between the noble and the plebeian families" see *Auto.*, p. 237. "Of the Swiss," wrote Miss Holroyd, "there seems to be but one opinion, they certainly do not possess 'les Grâces'" (*Girlhood, etc.*, p. 79).]

[3] ["Moi qui aimerais Lausanne cent fois davantage, si j'y pouvais être le seul de ma nation," he wrote in 1783" (*Corres.*, ii., 38). What he means by "the long habits of the English," if it can be made out, is ill-expressed. In June 1784 there were "three-score English at Lausanne". In October he wrote: "A colony of English have taken up the habit of spending their winters at Nice, and their summers in the Pays de Vaud" (*ib.*, ii., 111, 116).]

[4] [Voltaire mentions him in his *Épître à Horace* (*Œuvres*, xi., 268):—

"Ainsi, lorsqu'un pauvre homme, au fond de sa chaumière,
En dépit de Tissot, finissait sa carrière."

In a note he describes him as "célèbre médecin de Lausanne".

In an attic in his country-house was found in a heap of waste paper a long letter from Napoleon Bonaparte about the health of his uncle, dated "Ajaccio, April 1, 1787," endorsed by Tissot: "Lettre non répondue, peu intéressante" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 198).]

[5] [*Ante*, p. 98. In June 1784 there "were forty French at Lausanne". The following October he was walking on his terrace with "a natural son of Lewis XV., the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, Prince Henry of Prussia, and a dozen Counts, Barons, and extraordinary persons, among whom was a natural son of the Empress of Russia" (*ib.*, ii., 111, 115).]

[6] [*De l'Administration des Finances de la France.* 2 tom. 4°. Paris, 1785. A translation by T. Mortimer in 3 vols. 8vo was published in London the same year (*Brit. Mus. Cat.*).]

the castle and barony of Copet, near Geneva.[1] Of the merits and measures of that statesman various opinions may be entertained; but all impartial men must agree in their esteem of his integrity and patriotism.

In August 1784, Prince Henry of Prussia, in his way to Paris, passed three days at Lausanne. His military conduct has been praised by professional men; his character has been vilified by the wit and malice of a demon; but I was flattered by his affability, and entertained by his conversation.[2]

In his tour of Switzerland (September 1788) Mr. Fox gave me two days of free and private society. He seemed to feel, and even to envy, the happiness of my situation while I admired the powers of a superior man, as they are blended in his attractive character with the softness and simplicity of a child. Perhaps no human being was ever more perfectly exempt from the taint of malevolence, vanity, or falsehood.[3]

My transmigration from London to Lausanne could not be effected without interrupting the course of my historical labours. The hurry of my departure, the joy of my arrival, the delay of my tools, suspended their progress; and a full twelvemonth was lost before I could resume the thread of regular and daily industry. A number of books most requisite and least common had been previously selected[4]; the aca-

[1] [Necker and his wife had met Gibbon at Geneva. She wrote to him of this meeting: "Je réunissais dans un même lieu . . . une des douces et pures affections de ma jeunesse avec celle qui fait mon sort sur la terre et le rend si digne d'envie. Cette singularité, jointe aux agréments d'une conversation sans modèle, composait pour moi une sorte d'enchantement; et la connexion du passé et du présent rendait mes jours semblables à un songe sorti par la porte d'ivoire pour consoler les mortels. Ne voudrez-vous pas nous le faire continuer encore?" (*Le Salon de Madame Necker*, ii., 83.)

The castle is only a few miles from Crassy, the scene of their early love-making.

D'Haussonville, describing the castle gate, says: "La solide armature de fer inspirait à mon enfance une terreur respectueuse" (*Le Salon de Madame Necker*, i., 3). One of the flanking towers was built in the thirteenth century. More than a hundred years before Gibbon's visit Bayle had spent eighteen months there as tutor to the owner's children (*ib.*, ii., 222-33). From the house could be seen the town of Geneva, which Gibbon described in 1783 as "le triste séjour du travail et de la discorde" (*Corres.*, ii., 39).]

[2] [See Appendix 49.]

[3] [See Appendix, 50.]

[4] [He had with him, he wrote, "more than two thousand volumes, the choice of a chosen library" (*Corres.*, ii., 124).]

demical library of Lausanne, which I could use as my own, contained at least the fathers and councils[1]; and I have derived some occasional succour from the public collections of Berne[2] and Geneva. The fourth volume was soon terminated by an abstract of the controversies of the Incarnation, which the learned Dr. Prideaux was apprehensive of exposing to profane eyes. It had been the original design of the learned Dean Prideaux[3] to write the history of the ruin of the Eastern Church. In this work it would have been necessary, not only to unravel all those controversies which the Christians made about the hypostatical union, but also to unfold all the niceties and subtle notions which each sect entertained concerning it.[4] The pious historian was apprehensive of exposing that incomprehensible mystery to the cavils and objections of unbelievers: and he durst not, "seeing the nature of this book, venture it abroad in so wanton and lewd an age".[5]

In the fifth and sixth volumes the revolutions of the empire

[1] [To Deyverdun he wrote: "Malheureusement votre bibliothèque publique, en y ajoutant même celle de M. de Bochat, est assez piteuse" (*ib.*, ii., 48). Gibbon bequeathed to it 97 learned volumes (Read's *Historic Studies*, i., 144).]

[2] [Those from Berne he got by irregular means through a friend at Berne, who wrote: "I lend myself quite willingly to the petty deceit which the managing committee of the Library so well merits" (*ib.*, ii., 463).]

[3] [In the text Gibbon had written "the learned Dr. Prideaux," and in a note "the learned Dean Prideaux" (*Auto.*, p. 332). Lord Sheffield by incorporating the note in the text produced the repetition.]

[4] ["I have already observed that the disputes of the Trinity were succeeded by those of the Incarnation: alike scandalous to the Church, alike pernicious to the State, still more minute in their origin, still more durable in their effects" (*The Decline*, v., 96). After speaking of the Catholic doctrine of "the substantial, indissoluble and everlasting union of a perfect God with a perfect man," Gibbon goes on to describe the "secret and incurable discord which was cherished between those who were most apprehensive of confounding, and those who were most fearful of separating, the divinity and the humanity of Christ. . . . To escape from each other they wandered through many a dark and devious thicket, till they were astonished by the horrid phantoms of Cerinthus and Apollinaris, who guarded the opposite issues of the theological labyrinth. As soon as they beheld the twilight of sense and heresy they started, measured back their steps, and were again involved in the gloom of impenetrable orthodoxy" (*ib.*, v., 105).]

[5] See preface to the *Life of Mahomet*, p. xxi.—GIBBON. [Second ed. 1697, Preface, p. 17. The Preface is dated March 15, 169⅞.

"Two professed lives of Mahomet have been composed by Dr. Prideaux and the Count de Boulainvilliers; but the adverse wish of finding an impostor or an hero has too often corrupted the learning of the Doctor and the ingenuity of the Count" (*The Decline*, v., 352).]

and the world are most rapid, various, and instructive; and the Greek or Roman historians are checked by the hostile narratives of the barbarians of the East and the West.[1]

It was not till after many designs, and many trials, that I preferred, as I still prefer, the method of grouping my picture by nations; and the seeming neglect of chronological order is surely compensated by the superior merits of interest and perspicuity. The style of the first volume is, in my opinion, somewhat crude and elaborate; in the second and third it is ripened into ease, correctness, and numbers[2]; but in the three last I may have been seduced by the facility of my pen, and the constant habit of speaking one language and writing another may have infused some mixture of Gallic idioms. Happily for my eyes, I have always closed my studies with the day, and commonly with the morning; and a long, but temperate, labour has been accomplished, without fatiguing either the mind or body; but when I computed the remainder of my time and my task, it was apparent that, according to the season of publication, the delay of a month would be productive of that of a year. I was now straining for the goal, and in the last winter many evenings were borrowed from the social pleasures of Lausanne.[3] I could now wish that a pause, an interval, had been allowed for a serious revisal.

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception[4]: I

[1] I have followed the judicious precept of the Abbé de Mably (Manière d'écrire l'Histoire, p. 110), who advises the historian not to dwell too minutely on the decay of the eastern empire; but to consider the barbarian conquerors as a more worthy subject of his narrative. "Fas est et ab hoste doceri" (Ovid, *Meta.*, iv., 428).—GIBBON. [For Mably see *ante*, p. 199.]

[2] [*Ante*, p. 189.]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 90. On Jan. 20, 1787, he wrote to Lord Sheffield: "The mornings in winter, and in a country of early dinners, are very concise; to them, my usual period of study, I now frequently add the evenings, renounce cards and society, refuse the most agreeable evenings, or perhaps make my appearance at a late supper. By this extraordinary industry, which I never practised before, and to which I hope never to be again reduced, I see the last part of my History growing apace under my hands" (*Corres.*, ii., 151). It must be remembered that he worked all the year round. In four years he "had lain but a single night out of his own bed" (*ante*, p. 219, *n.*).]

[4] [*Ante*, p. 167.]

shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau,* or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent.[1] I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.[2] I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five quartos.[3] 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press.[4] 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the author and the printer[5]; the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.[6]

I cannot help recollecting a much more extraordinary fact,

[1] [See Appendix 51.]

[2] [On Feb. 13, 1837, Carlyle thus described to Emerson the completion of his *French Revolution:* "You, I hope, can have little conception of the feeling with which I wrote the last word of it, one night in early January, when the clock was striking ten, and our frugal Scotch supper coming in! I did not cry; nor I did not pray: but could have done both" (*Carlyle and Emerson Corres.*, ed. 1883, i., 114).]

[3] [*Ante*, pp. 190, 201.]

[4] [There was only one manuscript of Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 36).]

[5] [His friends Batt and Deyverdun had read the first volume, or part of it, in manuscript (*Corres.*, i., 265).]

[6] *Extract from* Mr. GIBBON'S *Common-place Book.*

The IVth Volume of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, begun March 1st, 1782—ended June 1784.
The Vth Volume, begun July 1784—ended May 1st, 1786.
The VIth Volume, begun May 18th, 1786—ended June 27th, 1787.
These three volumes were sent to press August 15th, 1787, and the whole impression was concluded April following.—SHEFFIELD.

which is affirmed of himself by Retif de la Brétonne, a voluminous and original writer of French novels. He laboured, and may still labour, in the humble office of corrector to a printing-house; but this office enabled him to transport an entire volume from his mind to the press; and his work was given to the public without ever having been written with a pen.[1]

After a quiet residence of four years, during which I had never moved ten miles from Lausanne, it was not without some reluctance and terror, that I undertook, in a journey of two hundred leagues, to cross the mountains and the sea. Yet this formidable adventure was achieved without danger or fatigue; and at the end of a fortnight I found myself in Lord Sheffield's house and library, safe, happy, and at home.[2] The character of my friend (Mr. Holroyd) had recommended him to a seat in parliament for Coventry, the command of a regiment of light dragoons, and an Irish peerage. The sense and spirit of his political writings have decided the public opinion on the great questions of our commercial interest with America and Ireland.

The sale of his *Observations on the American States* was diffusive, their effect beneficial; the Navigation Act, the palladium of Britain, was defended, and perhaps saved, by his pen; and he proves, by the weight of fact and argument, that the mother-country may survive and flourish after the loss of America.[3] My friend has never cultivated the arts of com-

[1] [I find no mention of this in the *Biog. Univ.* (under Rétif). He is described as "le plus fécond écrivain de son temps". After his second or third book "il quitta l'imprimerie pour faire des livres". He used to roam the streets at night. "Comme il portait d'habitude une écritoire dans sa poche, il s'en allait écrire ce qu'il avait vu soit à la lueur des réverbères, soit sur les parapets de l'île Saint-Louis." At one time he was worth 60,000 francs; but being ruined by the Revolution he became a corrector of the press. He died in 1806. He was a worthless scoundrel and a most licentious writer.]

[2] [In writing to Lord Sheffield just before leaving Lausanne he had called that town his home. "So happy do I feel myself *at home* [the italics are his], that nothing but the strongest calls of friendship and interest could drag me from hence" (*Corres.*, ii., 156). He reached London on Aug. 7, 1787, after the post had left, as he informed Lord Sheffield in a letter dated Aug. 8 (*ib.*, p. 157). To his step-mother he wrote on Aug. 9: "I reached the Adelphi Hotel, Wednesday the 8th instant, after the departure of the post" (*ib.*, p. 158). Apparently he did not wish her to know that he had let a whole day go by without writing to her.]

[3] [See Appendix 52.]

position[1]; but his materials are copious and correct, and he leaves on his paper the clear impression of an active and vigorous mind. His *Observations on the Trade, Manufactures, and present State of Ireland*, were intended to guide the industry, to correct the prejudices, and to assuage the passions of a country which seemed to forget that she could be free and prosperous only by a friendly connection with Great Britain. The concluding observations are written with so much ease and spirit, that they may be read by those who are the least interested in the subject.[2]

He fell[3] (in 1784) with the unpopular coalition; but his merit has been acknowledged at the last general election, 1790, by the honourable invitation and free choice of the city of Bristol.[4] During the whole time of my residence in England I was entertained at Sheffield Place and in Downing Street[5] by his hospitable kindness; and the most pleasant period was that which I passed in the domestic society of the family. In the larger circle of the metropolis I observed the country and the inhabitants with the knowledge, and without the prejudices, of an Englishman; but I rejoiced in the apparent increase of wealth and prosperity, which might be fairly divided between the spirit of the nation and the wisdom of the minister.[6] All party-resentment was now lost in oblivion:

[1] ["The subordinate beauties of style *and arrangement* you disclaim," Gibbon wrote to him in 1785 (*Corres.*, ii., 128). In printing this letter Lord Sheffield omitted the words I have italicised (*Misc. Works*, ii., 378).]

[2] [See Appendix 53.]

[3] It is not obvious from whence he fell; he never held nor desired any office of emolument whatever, unless his military commissions, and the command of a regiment of light dragoons, which he raised himself, and which was disbanded on the peace in 1783, should be deemed such.—SHEFFIELD.

[The fall was the loss of his seat for Coventry. Of those who supported the Coalition 159 fell with him—Fox's Martyrs, as they were called.]

[4] [See Appendix 54.]

[5] [The preface to the latter half of *The Decline* is dated "Downing Street, May 1, 1788". On July 2, 1793, Miss Holroyd wrote that Lord Sheffield "had agreed to let Government have his house in Downing Street" (*Girlhood, etc.*, p. 224).]

[6] [Gibbon wrote about his investments on Dec. 31, 1791: "The three per cents. are so high, and the country is in such a damned state of prosperity under that fellow Pitt, that it goes against me to purchase at such low interest" (*Corres.*, ii., 282). They stood at 90 (*Ann. Reg.*, 1791, ii., 110). By March, 1792, they had risen to 97. By the end of the year they had fallen to 74 (*Ib.*, 1792, ii., 152).]

since I was no man's rival, no man was my enemy. I felt the dignity of independence, and as I asked no more, I was satisfied with the general civilities of the world. The house in London which I frequented with most pleasure and assiduity was that of Lord North.[1] After the loss of power and of sight,[2] he was still happy in himself and his friends; and my public tribute of gratitude and esteem could no longer be suspected of any interested motive.[3] Before my departure from England, I was present at the august spectacle of Mr. Hastings's trial in Westminster Hall. It is not my province to absolve or condemn the Governor of India; but Mr. Sheridan's eloquence demanded my applause; nor could I hear without emotion the personal compliment which he paid me in the presence of the British nation.[4]

From this display of genius, which blazed four successive days, I shall stoop to a very mechanical circumstance. As I was waiting in the managers' box, I had the curiosity to inquire of the short-hand writer, how many words a ready and rapid orator might pronounce in an hour? From 7,000 to 7,500 was his answer. The medium of 7,200 will afford 120 words in a minute, and two words in each second. But this computation will only apply to the English language.

[1] [Lord North in 1790 succeeded his father as Earl of Guilford. He died two years later, a little after Reynolds. Gibbon wrote: "Lord Guilford and Sir Joshua Reynolds! two of the men, and two of the houses in London, on whom I the most relied for the comforts of society" (*Corres.*, ii., 311).]

[2] [Lord Sheffield wrote to W. Eden on May 10, 1787: "Lord North has no hopes; he says he has no expectations but of darkness. He held up his hand, and said he could not see it. He was, however, pleasant, and with his usual ability took up the questions of the day" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 418).]

[3] ["Were I ambitious of any other Patron than the Public I would inscribe this work to a Statesman who, in a long, a stormy, and at length an unfortunate administration, had many political opponents, almost without a personal enemy: who has retained in his fall from power many faithful and disinterested friends, and who, under the pressure of severe infirmity, enjoys the lively vigour of his mind, and the felicity of his incomparable temper" (*The Decline*, Preface to vol. iv. of quarto ed. Ed. Bury, Preface, p. 12. See *ante*, pp. 192, 214).

On May 20, 1783, Gibbon had written of him: "Avec beaucoup d'esprit, et des qualités très respectables, notre homme a la démarche lente et le cœur froid" (*Corres.*, ii., 37). On Dec. 20 he wrote: "Lord North suffered me to depart without even a civil answer to my letter. Were I capable of hating a man whom it is not easy to hate, I should find myself most amply revenged by the insignificance of the creature in this mighty revolution of India," his own peculiar department (*ib.*, p. 87).]

[4] [See Appendix 55.]

As the publication of my three last volumes was the principal object, so it was the first care of my English journey. The previous arrangements with the bookseller and the printer were settled in my passage through London,[1] and the proofs, which I returned more correct, were transmitted every post from the press to Sheffield Place. The length of the operation, and the leisure of the country, allowed some time to review my manuscript. Several rare and useful books, the Assises de Jerusalem,[2] Ramusius de Bello C. Pano,[3] the Greek Acts of the Synod of Florence,[4] the Statuta Urbis Romæ,[5] etc. were procured, and I introduced in their proper places the supplements which they afforded. The impression of the fourth volume had consumed three months. Our common interest required that we should move with a quicker pace; and Mr. Strahan fulfilled his engagement, which few printers could sustain, of delivering every week three thousand copies of nine sheets. The day of publication was, however, delayed that it might coincide with the fifty-first anniversary of my own birthday; the double festival was celebrated by a cheerful literary dinner at Mr. Cadell's house[6]; and I seemed to

[1] [Lord Sheffield wrote on August 22, 1787: "The three quartos will appear in the spring. The Gibbon wrote a note to Cadell, saying he hoped he would think the three younger of equal merit with the elder brothers, and equally valuable, and thus the bargain was immediately concluded" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 435).]

[2] ["No sooner had Godfrey of Bouillon accepted the office of supreme magistrate than he solicited the public and private advice of the Latin pilgrims, who were the best skilled in the statutes and customs of Europe. From these materials, with the counsel and approbation of the patriarch and barons, of the clergy and laity, Godfrey composed the ASSISE OF JERUSALEM, a precious monument of feudal jurisprudence" (*The Decline*, vi., 317).]

[3] [In Lord Sheffield's editions and in the *Auto.* this is misprinted "de Bello C. Paro". The book is *De bello Constantinopolitano et Imperatoribus Comnenis per Gallos et Venetos restitutis historia P. Ramnusii.* Editio altera. Venetiis, 1634, fol. *Brit. Mus. Cat.* sub Rannusio, Paolo. See *The Decline*, vi., 412, *n.*]

[4] [Gibbon, after describing the opening of the Council of the Greeks and Latins at Ferrara in 1438, continues: "It was only by the alternative of hunger or dispute that the Greeks could be persuaded to open the first conference; and they yielded with extreme reluctance to attend from Ferrara to Florence the rear of a flying synod" (*The Decline*, vii., 108).]

[5] [*Ib.*, vii., 293.]

[6] [Gibbon was born on April 27, O. S.; but the birthday was kept according to the new style, on May 8, 1788. He wrote to Dr. Robertson on March 26: "The important day is now fixed to the eighth of May, and it was chosen

blush while they read an elegant compliment from Mr. Hayley, whose poetical talents had more than once been employed in the praise of his friend. Before Mr. Hayley inscribed with my name his epistles on history,[1] I was not acquainted with that amiable man and elegant poet. He afterwards thanked me in verse for my second and third volumes; and in the summer of 1781, the Roman Eagle (a proud title) accepted the invitation of the English Sparrow, who chirped in the groves of Eartham, near Chichester.[2] As most of the former purchasers were naturally desirous of completing their sets, the sale of the quarto edition was quick and easy; and an octavo size[3] was printed, to satisfy at a cheaper rate the public demand. The conclusion of my work was generally read, and variously judged. The style has been exposed to much academical criticism; a religious clamour was revived, and the reproach of indecency has been loudly echoed by the rigid censors of morals. I never could understand the clamour that has been raised against the indecency of my three last volumes.[4] 1. An equal degree of freedom in the former part, especially in the first volume, had passed without reproach.

by Cadell, as it coincides with the end of the fifty-first year of the author's age. That honest and liberal bookseller has invited me to celebrate the double festival by a dinner at his house" (Stewart's *Robertson*, p. 366).]

[1] [See Appendix 56.]

[2] [Horace Walpole wrote on August 16, 1781 (*Letters*, viii., 70): "I have received from Brighthelmstone a long card in verse, from Mr. Hayley to Mr. Gibbon, inviting Livy to dine with Virgil".

Cowper, who visited Hayley in August, 1792, thus describes Eartham: "Here we are in the most elegant mansion that I have ever inhabited, and surrounded by the most delightful pleasure grounds that I have ever seen" (Southey's *Cowper*, vii., 139).

"All who knew Hayley," writes Southey, "concur in describing his manners as in the highest degree winning, and his conversation as delightful" (*Ib.*, iii., 66).]

[3] [In twelve vols., 1791. One in fourteen vols. 8vo had been published at Basil in 1789 (*Brit. Mus. Cat.*).]

[4] [In *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1788, p. 475, is a "Selection from Mr. Gibbon's learned and entertaining Notes" to the last three volumes. In the next number (p. 599) a correspondent reproaches the editor for "sullying his pages by those filthy extracts from a silly book called *The History of the Declension* [*sic*] *and Fall of the Roman Empire*". Some months later (p. 1157) another correspondent complains of "your pure pages being for the first time defiled with the filthy rakings of a celebrated historian". This was not the first defilement of the magazine. Its early numbers contained verses as grossly indecent as they were dull.]

2. I am justified in painting the manners of the times; the vices of Theodora[1] form an essential feature in the reign and character of Justinian; and the most naked tale in my history is told by the Rev. Mr. Joseph Warton, an instructor of youth[2] (*Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, pp. 322-324). 3. My English text is chaste, and all licentious passages are left in the obscurity of a learned language.[3] *Le Latin dans ses mots brave l'honnêteté*, says the correct Boileau,[4] in a country and idiom more scrupulous than our own. Yet, upon the whole, the History of the Decline and Fall seems to have struck root, both at home and abroad, and may, perhaps, a hundred years hence still continue to be abused.[5] I am less flattered by Mr. Porson's high encomium on the style and spirit of my history, than I am satisfied with his honourable testimony to my attention, diligence, and accuracy; those humble virtues, which religious zeal had most audaciously denied. The sweetness of his praise is tempered by a reasonable mixture of acid.[6] As the book may not be common in England, I shall transcribe my own character from the Bibliotheca Historica of Meuselius, a learned and laborious German. "Summis ævi nostri historicis Gibbonus sine dubio adnumerandus est. Inter Capitolii ruinas stans primum hujus operis scribendi consilium cepit. Florentissimos vitæ annos

[1] [*The Decline*, iv., 212.]

[2] [Headmaster of Winchester College.
"Should the licentiousness of the tale be questioned, I may exclaim with poor Sterne, that it is hard if I may not transcribe with caution what a Bishop could write without scruple!" (*The Decline*, vi., 173.)]

[3] [Gibbon, writing of Theodora, says: "Her murmurs, her pleasures, and her arts must be veiled in the obscurity of a learned language" (*The Decline*, iv., 213). He is parodied in the *Anti-Jacobin*, No. xxiii.: "For the *osculation*, or kissing of circles and other curves see Huygens, who has veiled this delicate and inflammatory subject in the decent obscurity of a learned language".
"Comme Bayle, il [Gibbon] se délecte (mais toujours en note) à la citation de quelques passages d'une obscénité érudite et froide, et il les commente avec une élégance recherchée (voir ce qu'il dit sur Théodora)" (Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries*, viii., 459).]

[4] ["Le Latin dans les mots brave l'honnêteté:
Mais le lecteur Français veut être respecté:
Du moindre sens impur la liberté l'outrage,
Si la pudeur des mots n'en adoucit l'image."
(*L'Art Poétique*, ii., 175.)]

[5] [See Appendix 57.]

[6] [See Appendix 58.]

colligendo et laborando eidem impendit. Enatum inde monumentum ære perennius, licet passim appareant sinistrè dicta, minus perfecta, veritati non satis consentanea. Videmus quidem ubique fere studium scrutandi veritatemque scribendi maximum: tamen sine Tillemontio[1] duce ubi scilicet hujus historia finitur sæpius noster titubat atque hallucinatur. Quod vel maxime fit ubi de rebus Ecclesiasticis vel de juris prudentiâ Romanâ (tom. iv.) tradit, et in aliis locis. Attamen nævi hujus generis haud impediunt quo minus operis summam et οικονομιαν præclare dispositam, delectum rerum sapientissimum, argutum quoque interdum, dictionemque seu stylum historico æque ac philosopho dignissimum, et vix a quoque alio Anglo, Humio ac Robertsono haud exceptis prærepto (*præreptum ?*) vehementer laudemus, atque sæculo nostro de hujusmodi historiâ gratulemur . . . Gibbonus adversarios cum in tum extra patriam nactus est, quia propagationem religionis Christianæ, non, ut vulgo, fieri solet, aut more Theologorum, sed ut Historicum et Philosophum decet, exposuerat."

The French, Italian, and German translations have been executed with various success; but, instead of patronising, I should willingly suppress such imperfect copies, which injure the character, while they propagate the name of the author. The first volume had been feebly, though faithfully, translated into French by M. Le Clerc de Septchenes, a young gentleman of a studious character and liberal fortune.[2] After his decease the work was continued by two manufacturers of Paris, MM. Desmuniers[3] and Cantwell[4]: but the former is

[1] [Gibbon records in *The Decline*, v., 132, under date of A.D. 514: "Here I must take leave for ever of that incomparable guide [Tillemont]—whose bigotry is overbalanced by the merits of erudition, diligence, veracity, and scrupulous minuteness. He was prevented by death from completing, as he designed, the sixth century of the Church and Empire" (see *ante*, pp. 182, 183, *n.*).]

[2] [See Appendix 59.]

[3] [Count Jean Nicolas Démeunier. In the summer of 1792 he escaped to America, returning to France in 1796 (*Dictionnaire des Parlementaires Français*, 1890, p. 332).]

[4] [André S. M. Cantwel. "*Traduttore traditore*, disent les Italiens. M. Quérard, appliquant cet adage à Cantwel, accuse ce traducteur aussi laborieux qu'inexact des trahisons suivantes de l'anglais [Here follows a list of translations]. Cantwel a travaillé en collaboration avec Marinié à la traduction" (*Nouv. Biog. Gén.*, 1854).]

now an active member in the national assembly, and the undertaking languishes in the hands of his associate. The superior merit of the interpreter, or his language, inclines me to prefer the Italian version: but I wish that it were in my power to read the German, which is praised by the best judges. The Irish pirates are at once my friends and my enemies.[1] But I cannot be displeased with the too numerous and correct impressions which have been published for the use of the continent at Basil in Switzerland.[2] The conquests of our language and literature are not confined to Europe alone, and a writer who succeeds in London is speedily read on the banks of the Delaware and the Ganges.[3]

In the preface of the fourth volume, while I gloried in the name of an Englishman, I announced my approaching return to the neighbourhood of the Lake of Lausanne.[4] This last trial confirmed my assurance that I had wisely chosen for my own happiness; nor did I once, in a year's visit, entertain a wish of settling in my native country. Britain is the free and fortunate island; but where is the spot in which I could unite the comforts and beauties of my establishment at Lausanne? The tumult of London astonished my eyes and ears; the amusements of public places were no longer adequate to the trouble; the clubs and assemblies were filled with new faces and young men; and our best society, our long and

[1] [*Ante*, p. 195.]

[2] Of their fourteen octavo volumes, the two last include the whole body of the notes. The public importunity had forced *me* to remove them from the end of the volume to the bottom of the page; but I have often repented of my compliance.—GIBBON.

[Hume, on receiving the present of vol. i., wrote to Strahan: "One is plagued with his notes, according to the present method of printing the book. When a note is announced, you turn to the end of the volume; and there you often find nothing but the reference to an authority. All these authorities ought only to be printed at the margin or the bottom of the page" (*Letters to Strahan*, p. 314).]

[3] ["Boswell's writings," wrote Macaulay, "are read beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross" (*Misc. Writings*, ed. 1871, p. 387). The western boundary of literature, which in less than seventy years was thus extended from the Delaware to beyond the Mississippi, would now have to be carried to the shores of the Pacific, while the eastern boundary has already reached Japan.]

[4] [See Appendix 60.]

late dinners, would soon have been prejudicial to my health.[1] Without any share in the political wheel, I must be idle and insignificant: yet the most splendid temptations would not have enticed me to engage a second time in the servitude of Parliament or office. At Tunbridge, some weeks after the publication of my History, I reluctantly quitted Lord and Lady Sheffield,[2] and, with a young Swiss friend,[3] whom I had introduced to the English world, I pursued the road of Dover and Lausanne. My habitation was embellished in my absence, and the last division of books, which followed my steps, increased my chosen library to the number of between six and seven thousand volumes.[4] My seraglio was ample, my choice was free, my appetite was keen. After a full repast on Homer and Aristophanes, I involved myself in the philosophic maze of the writings of Plato, of which the dramatic is, perhaps, more interesting than the argumentative part: but I stepped aside into every path of inquiry which reading or reflection accidentally opened.[5]

[1] [In 1783 he wrote: "La tempérance d'un repas Anglais vous permet de goûter de cinq ou six vins différens, et vous ordonne de boire une bouteille de claret après le dessert" (*Corres.*, ii., 46).]

[2] [Lord Sheffield wrote on July 29, 1788: "Alas! we are just returned from attending The Gibbon towards Dover. After passing a year with us at Sheffield Place and Downing Street, he is gone to what he calls home. He has taken with him all his books, and talks of visiting England occasionally. . . . My lady and I accompanied him to Tunbridge Wells, where we passed three days with Lord North" (*Auckland Corres.*, ii., 220). Gibbon is often spoken of as "The Gibbon" or "Le Gibbon".]

[3] M. Wilhelm de Sévery.—SHEFFIELD. [He came to England in Nov. 1787, and was placed by Gibbon at school to learn English. The youth felt parting with his protector; "mais au plus fort de son abattement, lorsque, pour dernière consolation, je lui ai proposé de retourner à Lausanne, il m'a répondu du ton le plus fier, *Plutôt mourir*". Gibbon, in writing to his father, spoke of him as "notre fils," "notre enfant". He left him by his will £3,000, and his furniture, plate, etc., at Lausanne (*Misc. Works*, i., 427; ii., 409, 415, 423, and *post*, p. 268).]

[4] [See Appendix 61.]

[5] [Writing on Oct. 12, 1790, of his endeavour "to find out some occupation more invigorating than mere reading can afford," he continued: "But the remembrance of a servitude of twenty years frightened me from again engaging in a long undertaking which I might probably never finish. It would be better, I thought, to select from the historical monuments of all ages and all nations such subjects as might be treated separately. When these little works, which might be entitled Historical Excursions, amounted to a volume, I would offer

Alas! the joy of my return, and my studious ardour, were soon damped by the melancholy state of my friend Mr. Deyverdun.[1] His health and spirits had long suffered a gradual decline, a succession of apoplectic fits announced his dissolution; and before he expired, those who loved him could not wish for the continuance of his life. The voice of reason might congratulate his deliverance, but the feelings of nature and friendship could be subdued only by time: his amiable character was still alive in my remembrance; each room, each walk, was imprinted with our common footsteps; and I should blush at my own philosophy, if a long interval of study had not preceded and followed the death of my friend. By his last will he left to me the option of purchasing his house and garden, or of possessing them during my life, on the payment either of a stipulated price, or of an easy retribution to his kinsman and heir. I should probably have been tempted by the demon of property, if some legal difficulties had not been started against my title[2]; a contest would have been vexatious, doubtful, and invidious; and the heir most gratefully subscribed an agreement, which rendered my life-possession more perfect, and his future condition more advan-

it to the public; and the present might be repeated, until either the public or myself were tired" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 354).

On Jan. 6, 1793, he wrote that he had long thought of writing "the Lives, or rather the Characters, of the most eminent Persons in Arts and Arms, in Church and State, who have flourished in Britain from the reign of Henry VIII. to the present age" (*ib.*, i., 391).

Four days after his death John Pinkerton wrote to John Nichols: "In July last Mr. Gibbon was pleased to call me in as his coadjutor in a design he meditated of publishing all the early English historians in ten or twelve volumes folio" (Nichols's *Lit. Hist.*, v., 676).]

[1] [He died on July 4, 1789. "I fancied," wrote Gibbon, "that time and reflection had prepared me for the event; but the habits of three and thirty years' friendship are not so easily broken. The first days, and more especially the first nights, were indeed painful" (*Corres.*, ii., 194). By his will of 1788 Gibbon had bequeathed to him the life-interest of £4,000 (*Auto.*, p. 421).]

[2] ["There is a law in this country, as well as in some provinces of France, which is styled *le droit de retrait*, *le retrait lignager*, by which the relations of the deceased are entitled to redeem a house or estate at the price for which it has been sold; and as the sum fixed by poor Deyverdun is much below its known value, a crowd of competitors are beginning to start. The best opinions (for they are divided) are in my favour, that I am not subject to *le droit de retrait*, since I take, not as a purchaser, but as a legatee" (*Corres.*, ii., 202).]

tageous.[1] Yet I had often revolved the judicious lines in which Pope answers the objections of his long-sighted friend :

> Pity to build without or child [a son] or wife ;
> Why, you'll enjoy it only all your life :
> Well, if the use be mine, does [can] it concern one,
> Whether the name belong to Pope or Vernon ?[2]

The certainty of my tenure has allowed me to lay out a considerable sum in improvements and alterations : they have been executed with skill and taste ; and few men of letters, perhaps, in Europe, are so desirably lodged as myself. But I feel, and with the decline of years I shall more painfully feel, that I am alone in Paradise.[3] Among the circle of my acquaintance at Lausanne, I have gradually acquired the solid and tender friendship of a respectable family[4] : the four persons of whom it is composed are all endowed with the virtues best adapted to their age and situation ; and I am encouraged to love the parents as a brother, and the children as a father. Every day we seek and find the opportunities of meeting : yet even this valuable connection cannot supply the loss of domestic society.

[1] [*Corres.*, ii., 202.]

[2] [Pope, *Imit. Hor. Sat.*, ii., 2, 163. "How often," Gibbon wrote, "did I repeat to myself the philosophical lines of Pope, which seem to determine the question !" (*Corres.*, ii., 195.)]

[3] ["July 25, 1789. The prospect before me is a melancholy solitude. . . . I have conceived a romantic idea of educating and adopting Charlotte Porten [his cousin] ; as we descend into the vale of years our infirmities require some domestic female society. Charlotte would be the comfort of my age, and I could reward her care and tenderness with a decent fortune" (*ib.*, ii., 200). Her mother would not part with her (*ib.*, p. 221).

"May 15, 1790. Since the loss of poor Deyverdun I am *alone ;* and even in Paradise solitude is painful to a social mind. . . . Some expedient, even the most desperate, must be embraced, to secure the domestic society of a male or female companion" (*ib.*, p. 215).

"Aug. 7, 1790. Sometimes, in a solitary mood, I have fancied myself married to one or another of those whose society and conversation are the most pleasing to me ; but when I have painted in my fancy all the probable consequences of such an union, I have started from my dream, rejoiced in my escape, and ejaculated a thanksgiving that I was still in possession of my natural freedom" (*ib.*, p. 220).]

[4] The family of de Sévery.—SHEFFIELD. [On Nov. 10, 1792, when the father of the family was dying, Gibbon wrote that his death "would break for ever the most perfect system of domestic happiness, in which I had so large and intimate a share" (*Corres.*, ii., 336). See *post*, p. 269.]

Within the last two or three years our tranquillity has been clouded by the disorders of France: many families of Lausanne were alarmed and affected by the terrors of an impending bankruptcy; but the revolution, or rather the dissolution of the kingdom, has been heard and felt in the adjacent lands.[1]

I beg leave to subscribe my assent to Mr. Burke's creed on the revolution of France.[2] I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can almost excuse his reverence for church establishments.[3] I have sometimes thought of writing a dialogue of the dead, in which Lucian, Erasmus, and Voltaire should mutually acknowledge the danger of exposing an old superstition to the contempt of the blind and fanatic multitude.[4]

A swarm of emigrants of both sexes, who escaped from the public ruin, has been attracted by the vicinity, the manners, and the language of Lausanne; and our narrow habitations in town and country are now occupied by the first names and titles of the departed monarchy. These noble fugitives are entitled to our pity; they may claim our esteem, but they cannot, in their present state of mind and fortune, much con-

[1] [See Appendix 62.]

[2] [We are reminded of Burke's brother-candidate at Bristol in 1774, who, at the end of one of the orator's speeches, exclaimed earnestly: "I say ditto to Mr. Burke—I say ditto to Mr. Burke" (Prior's *Burke*, ed. 1872, p. 152).]

[3] [See Appendix 63.]

[4] ["The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful. . . . We may be well assured that a writer conversant with the world [like Lucian] would never have ventured to expose the gods of his country to public ridicule, had they not already been the objects of secret contempt among the polished and enlightened orders of society" (*The Decline*, i., 28, 30).

"The great and incomprehensible *secret* of the universe eludes the enquiry of man. Where reason cannot instruct, custom may be permitted to guide; and every nation seems to consult the dictates of prudence by a faithful attachment to those rites and opinions which have received the sanction of ages" (*ib.*, iii., 192).

Sainte-Beuve, after quoting the passage in the text, continues: "Tous ces retours de Gibbon sont sans doute exclusivement dans un intérêt politique et social, et ses paroles trouvent encore moyen de s'y imprégner d'un secret mépris pour ce qu'il ne sent pas. Ne lui demandez pas plus de chaleur ni de sympathie pour cet ordre de sentiments ou de vérités; il a du lettré chinois dans sa manière d'apprécier les religions" (*Causeries*, viii., 433).]

tribute to our amusement.[1] Instead of looking down as calm and idle spectators on the theatre of Europe, our domestic harmony is somewhat embittered by the infusion of party spirit: our ladies and gentlemen assume the character of self-taught politicians; and the sober dictates of wisdom and experience are silenced by the clamour of the triumphant *democrates*.[2] The fanatic missionaries of sedition have scattered the seeds of discontent in our cities and villages, which had flourished above two hundred and fifty years without fearing the approach of war, or feeling the weight of government. Many individuals, and some communities, appear to be infested with the Gallic phrenzy, the wild theories of equal and boundless freedom[3]; but I trust that the body of the people will be faithful to their sovereign and to themselves; and I am satisfied that the failure or success of a revolt would equally terminate in the ruin of the country. While the aristocracy of Berne protects the happiness, it is superfluous to enquire whether it be founded in the rights of man[4]; the economy of

[1] [Miss Holroyd wrote at Lausanne in 1791: "There is a very pleasant set of French here; but we live entirely with the Severys and Mr. G.'s set, which is certainly not equally pleasant. The French and Swiss do not take to one another at all. . . . Mr. Gibbon dislikes the French very much, which is nothing but Swiss prejudice, of which he has imbibed a large quantity" (*Girlhood*, etc., pp. 63, 73).]

[2] ["Dec. 28, 1791. Praised be the Lord! we are infested with few foreigners, either French or English. Even our Democrates are more reasonable or more discreet; it is agreed to waive the subject of politics, and we all seem happy and cordial" (*Corres.*, ii., 279).

Romilly describes in 1781 how the factions had "hurt the society of Geneva. Politics had engrossed what before was given to literature" (*Life of Romilly*, ed. 1840, i., 56).]

[3] ["In a civilised state every faculty of man is expanded and exercised; and the great chain of mutual dependence connects and embraces the several members of society. The most numerous portion of it is employed in constant and useful labour. The select few, placed by fortune above that necessity, can, however, fill up their time by the pursuits of interest or glory, by the improvement of their estate or of their understanding, by the duties, the pleasures, and even the follies of social life" (*The Decline*, i., 221). "The distinctions of ranks and *persons* is the firmest basis of a mixed and limited government" (*ib.*, iv., 470).

"If you begin to improve the constitution, you may be driven step by step from the disfranchisement of Old Sarum to the King in Newgate, the Lords voted useless, the Bishops abolished, and a House of Commons without articles (*sans culottes*)" (*Corres.*, ii., 347). See also *ib.*, p. 356.]

[4] [In 1785 he wrote: "There is nothing pleases me so much in this country as to enjoy all the blessings of a good government without ever talking or thinking of our governors" (*Corres.*, ii., 131). This doctrine Gibbon enforces in the

the state is liberally supplied without the aid of taxes; and the magistrates *must* reign with prudence and equity, since they are unarmed in the midst of an armed nation.[1]

The revenue of Berne, excepting some small duties, is derived from church lands, tithes, feudal rights, and interest of money. The republic has nearly 500,000l. sterling in the English funds, and the amount of their treasure is unknown to the citizens themselves. For myself (may the omen be averted) I can only declare, that the first stroke of a rebel drum would be the signal of my immediate departure.[2]

When I contemplate the common lot of mortality, I must acknowledge that I have drawn a high prize in the lottery of life. The far greater part of the globe is overspread with barbarism or slavery: in the civilized world, the most numerous class is condemned to ignorance and poverty[3]; and the double fortune of my birth in a free and enlightened country, in an honourable[4] and wealthy family, is the lucky chance of an unit against millions.[5] The general probability is about three to one, that a new-born infant will not live to complete his fiftieth year.[6] I have now passed that age, and may fairly

Decline (i., 78). "If a man," he writes, "were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power under the guidance of virtue and wisdom." Nevertheless the historian sees "in the public felicity the latent causes of decay and corruption. This long peace, and the uniform government of the Romans, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated" (*ib.*, p. 56).]

[1] [See Appendix 64.]

[2] [His departure was caused by the death of Lady Sheffield, "whom I had known," he wrote, "and loved above three and twenty years, and whom I often styled by the endearing name of sister" (*Corres.*, ii., 378). She died on April 3, 1793; the news reached him on April 26. He started on May 9; but having to avoid the seat of war, he did not reach England till about June 1 (*ib.*, pp. 377, 379, 384). For the dangers that he ran see *post*, p. 248.]

[3] [See Appendix 65.]

[4] [His grandfather had dishonoured himself as a South Sea Director (*ante*, p. 19.]

[5] [*Ante*, p. 26.]

[6] See Buffon, *Supplément à l'Histoire Naturelle* [ed. 1777], tom. vii. [iv.], pp. 158-164. Of a given number of new-born infants one half, by the fault of nature or man, is extinguished before the age of puberty and reason. A melancholy calculation!—GIBBON. [See *ante*, p. 29.]

estimate the present value of my existence in the three-fold division of mind, body, and estate.

1. The first and indispensable requisite of happiness is a clear conscience, unsullied by the reproach or remembrance of an unworthy action.

——— Hic murus aheneus esto
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.[1]

I am endowed with a cheerful temper,[2] a moderate sensibility, and a natural disposition to repose rather than to activity[3]: some mischievous appetites and habits have perhaps been corrected by philosophy or time. The love of study, a passion which derives fresh vigour from enjoyment, supplies each day, each hour, with a perpetual source of independent and rational pleasure[4]; and I am not sensible of any decay of the mental faculties.[5] The original soil has been highly improved by cultivation; but it may be questioned, whether some flowers of fancy, some grateful errors, have not been eradicated with the weeds of prejudice. 2. Since I have

[1] [Horace, *Epis.*, i., i., 59.

"Be this thy brazen bulwark of defence,
Still to preserve thy conscious innocence,
Nor e'er turn pale with guilt."

(Francis.)

For Sir Robert Walpole's misquotation of these lines in the House ("nulli pallescere culpæ," he said), and the guinea which he lost to Pulteney by wagering that he was right, see Coxe's *Walpole*, ed. 1798, i., 644.]

[2] [He boasted of his "propensity to view and to enjoy every object in the most favourable light" (*Corres.*, ii., 88). Perhaps he derived this from his aunt, Miss Porten, who had, he wrote, "a most invaluable happiness of temper, which showed her the agreeable or comfortable side of every object and every situation" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 392).

"His physician, Dr. Schöll," writes General Read, "who died in 1835, always spoke of his 'tranquille, bon et doux' character. His daughter told me that she had never heard any unkind word or action attributed to Gibbon" (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 506).]

[3] [Speaking of the love of pleasure and the love of action, he says: "The character in which both the one and the other should be united and harmonised would seem to constitute the most perfect idea of human nature" (*The Decline*, ii., 35).]

[4] [This pleasure was interrupted by the French Revolution. On Nov. 25, 1792, he wrote: "The *times* will not allow me to read or think" (*Corres.*, ii., 347).]

[5] [In the preface to the second half of *The Decline* (i., Preface, p. 13) he says: "In the ardent pursuit of truth and knowledge I am not conscious of decay. To an active mind indolence is more painful than labour."]

escaped from the long perils of my childhood, the serious advice of a physician has seldom been requisite.[1] "The madness of superfluous health"[2] I have never known; but my tender constitution has been fortified by time, and the inestimable gift of the sound and peaceful slumbers of infancy may be imputed both to the mind and body.[3] 3. I have already described the merits of my society and situation; but these enjoyments would be tasteless or bitter if their possession were not assured by an annual and adequate supply. According to the scale of Switzerland, I am a rich man; and I am indeed rich, since my income is superior to my expense, and my expense is equal to my wishes.[4] My friend Lord Sheffield has kindly relieved me from the cares to which my taste and temper are most adverse[5]: shall I add, that since the failure of my first wishes, I have never entertained any serious thoughts of a matrimonial connection?[6]

I am disgusted with the affectation of men of letters, who complain that they have renounced a substance for a shadow; and that their fame (which sometimes is no insupportable weight) affords a poor compensation for envy, censure, and persecution.[7] My own experience, at least, has taught me a

[1] [*Post*, p. 258.]

[2] [Pope, *Essay on Man*, iii., 3. See *ante*, p. 42.]

[3] [In July 1785 he wrote: "Good spirits, good appetite, good sleep are my habitual state, and though verging towards fifty I still feel myself a young man" (*Corres.*, ii., 129). In 1790 his health began to fail. "From Feb. 9 to July 1 I was not able," he wrote, "to move from my house or chair." In the following winter he was again confined for several weeks (*ib.*, pp. 221, 233). "The seeds of the gout," he said, "were sown in his constitution by the hard drinking" of his militia days (*Auto.*, p. 189).]

[4] [When his estate at Beriton was selling he wrote: "I shall at last attain, what I have always sighed for, a clear and competent income, above my wants and equal to my wishes" (*Corres.*, ii., 192).]

[5] [The management and sale of his estate.]

[6] [See Appendix 66.]

[7] M. d'Alembert relates, that as he was walking in the gardens of Sans Souci with the King of Prussia, Frederic said to him, "Do you see that old woman, a poor weeder, asleep on that sunny bank? she is probably a more happy being than either of us". The king and the philosopher may speak for themselves; for my part I do not envy the old woman.—GIBBON.

["J'ai toujours méprisé la triste philosophie qui veut nous rendre insensibles à la gloire" (*Corres.*, i., 292).

"I have never affected, indeed I have never understood, the stoical apathy,

very different lesson: twenty happy years have been animated by the labour of my History[1]; and its success has given me a name, a rank, a character, in the world, to which I should not otherwise have been entitled. The freedom of my writings has indeed provoked an implacable tribe; but, as I was safe from the stings, I was soon accustomed to the buzzing of the hornets: my nerves are not tremblingly alive, and my literary temper is so happily framed, that I am less sensible of pain than of pleasure.[2] The rational pride of an author may be offended, rather than flattered, by vague indiscriminate praise[3]; but he cannot, he should not, be indifferent to the fair testimonies of private and public esteem.[4] Even his moral sympathy may be gratified by the

the proud contempt of criticism which some authors have publicly professed. Fame is the motive, it is the reward of our labours; nor can I easily comprehend how it is possible that we should remain cold and indifferent with regard to the attempts which are made to deprive us of the most valuable object of our possessions, or at least of our hopes" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 517).

He did not always write in this strain. In the *Decline*, vi., 341, he describes how Saladin "renounced the temptations of pleasure for the graver follies of fame and dominion".

"Men," said Johnson, "have a solicitude about fame, and the greater share they have of it, the more afraid they are of losing it" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 451).

Burke described fame as "a passion which is the instinct of all great souls" (Payne's *Burke*, i., 148).

Compare the "laudumque immensa cupido" of Virgil (*Æneid*, vi., 823), and "That last infirmity of noble mind" of Milton (*Lycidas*, l. 71).]

[1] [In *The Decline*, vi., 26, after quoting the Caliph's saying that in a reign of fifty years he had enjoyed but fourteen days of pure and genuine happiness, Gibbon adds in a note: "If I may speak of myself (the only person of whom I can speak with certainty), *my* happy hours have far exceeded, and far exceed the scanty numbers of the Caliph of Spain; and I shall not scruple to add that many of them are due to the pleasing labour of the present composition".]

[2] ["Every one of Racine's tragedies," writes Dr. Warton, "was attacked by malignant critics. He used to say that these paltry critics gave him more pain than all his applauders had given him pleasure" (Warton's *Pope's Works*, i., 229). This was perhaps true of Pope (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 303, 315), and was certainly true of Tennyson. See *ante*, p. 126, *n.* 2.]

[3] ["The Marquis of Tuscany loved praise and hated flattery; a nice touch-stone which discriminates vanity from the love of fame" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 406). "Dearest madam," said Johnson to Hannah More, when she kept on flattering him, "consider with yourself what your flattery is worth, before you bestow it so freely" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 341).]

[4] ["Our uncertainty concerning our own merit, and our anxiety to think favourably of it, should together naturally enough make us desirous to know the opinion of other people concerning it; to be more than ordinarily elevated when that opinion is favourable" (Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. 1801, i., 259).]

idea, that now, in the present hour, he is imparting some degree of amusement or knowledge to his friends in a distant land: that one day his mind will be familiar to the grandchildren of those who are yet unborn.[1] I cannot boast of the friendship or favour of princes; the patronage of English literature has long since been devolved on our booksellers,[2] and the measure of their liberality is the least ambiguous test of our common success. Perhaps the golden mediocrity of my fortune[3] has contributed to fortify my application.

The present is a fleeting moment, the past is no more; and our prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful. This day may *possibly* be my last: but the laws of probability, so true in general, so fallacious in particular, still allow about fifteen years.[4] I shall soon enter into the period which, as the most agreeable of my long life, was selected by the judgment and experience of the sage Fontenelle. His choice is approved by the eloquent historian of nature, who fixes our moral happiness to the mature season in which our passions are

[1] In the first of ancient or modern romances (Tom Jones), this proud sentiment, this feast of fancy, is enjoyed by the genius of Fielding.—"Come, bright love of fame, etc., fill my ravished fancy with the hopes of charming ages yet to come. Foretel me that some tender maid, whose grandmother is yet unborn, hereafter, when, under the fictitious name of Sophia, she reads the real worth which once existed in my Charlotte, shall from her sympathetic breast send forth the heaving sigh. Do thou teach me not only to foresee but to enjoy, nay even to feed on future praise. Comfort me by the [a] solemn assurance, that, when the little parlour in which I sit at this moment [instant] shall be reduced to a worse furnished box, I shall be read with honour by those who never knew nor saw me, and whom I shall neither know nor see" (Book xiii., ch. 1.)—GIBBON.

["A just estimate of greatness, and the assurance of immortal fame, improve our relish for the pleasures of retirement" (*The Decline*, i., 388). See also *ib.*, ii., 19, where Gibbon tells how the sages of Greece and Rome "reflected on the desire of fame, which transported them into future ages far beyond the bounds of death and of the grave".

For his earlier praise of *Tom Jones*, see *ante*, p. 4.]

[2] ["A man (said Johnson) goes to a bookseller and gets what he can. We have done with patronage" (Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 59). "Andrew Millar [the bookseller]," he said, "is the Mæcenas of the age" (*ib.*, i., 287, *n.*).]

[3] ["Auream quisquis mediocritatem Diligit," etc. (Horace, *Odes*, ii., 10., 5. See *ante*, p. 188.

Gibbon maintained that "few works of merit and importance had been executed in a garret" (*Auto.*, p. 292). Among his contemporaries were Thomson, Fielding, Johnson, Smollett, and Goldsmith, all poor men, and most of them not unacquainted with a garret.]

[4] [See *post*, p. 265, and Appendix 67.]

supposed to be calmed,[1] our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune established on a solid basis. In private conversation, that great and amiable man added the weight of his own experience; and this autumnal felicity might be exemplified in the lives of Voltaire, Hume, and many other men of letters.[2] I am far more inclined to embrace than to dispute this comfortable doctrine. I will not suppose any premature decay of the mind or body; but I must reluctantly observe that two causes, the abbreviation of time, and the failure of hope,[3] will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life.

The proportion of a part to the whole is the only standard by which we can measure the length of our existence. At the age of twenty, one year is a tenth perhaps of the time which has elapsed within our consciousness and memory: at the age of fifty it is no more than the fortieth, and this relative value continues to decrease till the last sands are shaken by the hand of death. This reasoning may seem metaphysical; but on a trial it will be found satisfactory and just. The warm desires, the long expectations of youth, are founded on the ignorance of themselves and of the world: they are gradually damped by time and experience, by disappointment or possession; and after the middle season the crowd must be content to remain at the foot of the mountain; while the few who have climbed the summit aspire to descend or expect to fall. In old age, the consolation of hope is reserved for the tenderness of parents, who commence a new life in their children; the faith of enthusiasts who sing Hallelujahs above the clouds,[4] and the vanity of authors who presume the immortality of their name and writings.[5]

[1] ["And calm of mind, all passion spent" (*Samson Agonistes*, l. 1758).]

[2] [See Appendix 68.]

[3] [Gibbon describes hope as "the best comfort of our imperfect condition" (*The Decline*, i., 40).]

[4] [For the "small number of the Elect" to whom "this celestial hope is confined" see *Auto.*, p. 349.]

[5] [The whole of this last paragraph Lord Sheffield degraded from the text to a note.

This conclusion is dated Lausanne, March 2, 1791 (*Auto.*, p. 349). Much however of the Autobiography was written in the years 1792-3 (*ib.*, Table of Contents).]

Lord Sheffield's Continuation of the Memoirs.[1]

Mr. Gibbon's letters in general bear a strong resemblance to the style and turn of his conversation; the characteristics of which were vivacity, elegance, and precision, with knowledge astonishingly extensive and correct.[2] He never ceased to be instructive and entertaining; and in general there was a vein of pleasantry in his conversation which prevented its becoming languid, even during a residence of many months with a family in the country.

It has been supposed that he always arranged what he intended to say, before he spoke; his quickness in conversation contradicts this notion[3]: but it is very true, that before he sat down to write a note or letter, he completely arranged

[1] [The passages which I am printing from this continuation are taken from Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works* (i., 277-8, 329-31, 404-28). The intervals are filled up with correspondence, which can be now much better read in Mr. Rowland E. Prothero's *Letters of Edward Gibbon.*]

[2] [Miss Holroyd wrote six weeks after his death: "Papa has read us several parts of Mr. Gibbon's Memoirs, written so exactly in the style of his conversation that, while we felt delighted at the beauty of the thoughts and elegance of the language, we could not help feeling a severe pang at the idea we should never hear his instructive and amusing conversation any more" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 273).

"Mr. Gibbon's conversation, though in the highest degree informing, was not externally brilliant. He was by no means fluent of speech; his articulation was not graceful; his sentences were evidently laboured, as if he was fearful of committing himself. It was rather pedantic and stiff than easy; yet by some unaccountable fascination it was always agreeable and impressive" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1794, p. 178).

Malone, writing of his death, continued: "He had an immense fund of anecdote and of erudition of various kinds, both ancient and modern; and had acquired such a facility and elegance of talk that I had always great pleasure in listening to him. The manner and voice, though they were peculiar, and I believe artificial at first, did not at all offend, for they had become so appropriated as to appear natural" (Hist. MSS. C. 13th Report, App. viii., p. 230). At an earlier date Malone recorded: "Mr. Gibbon is very replete with anecdotes, and tells them with great happiness and fluency" (Prior's *Malone*, p. 382). Mme. D'Arblay describes his voice as "gentle, but of studied precision of accent" (*Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, ii., 224). On the other hand, according to Garat, quoted by Sainte-Beuve: "Sa voix, qui n'avait que des accens aigus, ne pouvait avoir d'autre moyen d'arriver au cœur que de percer les oreilles" (*Causeries*, viii., 440).]

[3] [Miss Holroyd wrote of him at Lausanne: "When he opens his mouth (which you know he generally does some time before he has arranged his sentence)," etc. (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 77).]

in his mind what he meant to express. He pursued the same method in respect to other composition; and he occasionally would walk several times about his apartment before he had rounded a period to his taste.[1] He has pleasantly remarked to me, that it sometimes cost him many a turn before he could throw a sentiment into a form that gratified his own criticism. His systematic habit of arrangement in point of style, assisted, in his instance, by an excellent memory and correct judgment, is much to be recommended to those who aspire to any perfection in writing.

It may, perhaps, not be quite uninteresting to the readers of these Memoirs, to know that I found Mr. Gibbon at Lausanne[2] in possession of an excellent house; the view from which, and from the terrace, was so uncommonly beautiful, that even his own pen would with difficulty describe the scene which it commanded. This prospect comprehended everything vast and magnificent, which could be furnished by the finest mountains among the Alps, the most extensive view of the Lake of Geneva, with a beautifully varied and cultivated country, adorned by numerous villas, and picturesque buildings, intermixed with beautiful masses of stately trees. Here my friend received us with an hospitality and kindness which I can never forget. The best apartments of the house were appropriated to our use; the choicest society of the place was sought for, to enliven our visit, and render every day of it cheerful and agreeable. It was impossible for any man to be more esteemed and admired than Mr. Gibbon was at Lausanne. The preference he had given to that place, in adopting it for a residence, rather than his own country, was felt and acknowledged by all the inhabitants; and he may have been said almost to have given the law to a set of as willing subjects as any man ever presided over. In return for the deference shown to him, he mixed, without any affectation, in all the society, I mean all the best society, that Lausanne afforded; he could indeed command it, and was, perhaps, for that reason

[1] [*Ante* p. 201.]

[2] [In the summer of 1791.]

the more partial to it; for he often declared that he liked society more as a relaxation from study, than as expecting to derive from it amusement or instruction; that to books he looked for improvement, not to living persons. But this I considered partly as an answer to my expressions of wonder, that a man who might choose the most various and most generally improved society in the world, namely, in England, should prefer the very limited circle of Lausanne, which he never deserted, but for an occasional visit to M. and Madame Necker. It must not, however, be understood, that in choosing Lausanne for his home, he was insensible to the value of a residence in England: he was not in possession of an income which corresponded with his notions of ease and comfort in his own country. In Switzerland, his fortune was ample.[1] To this consideration of fortune may be added another which also had its weight; from early youth Mr. Gibbon had contracted a partiality for foreign taste and foreign habits of life, which made him less a stranger abroad than he was, in some respects, in his native country. This arose, perhaps, from having been out of England from his sixteenth to his twenty-first year; yet, when I came to Lausanne, I found him apparently without relish for French society. During the stay I made with him he renewed his intercourse with the principal French who were at Lausanne; of whom there happened to be a considerable number, distinguished for rank or talents; many indeed respectable for both. . . . In the social and singularly pleasant months that I passed with Mr. Gibbon, he enjoyed his usual cheerfulness, with good health. After he left England, in 1788, he had had a severe attack, mentioned in one of the foregoing letters,[2] of an erysipelas, which at last settled in one of his legs, and left something of a dropsical tendency; for at this time I first perceived a considerable degree of swelling about the ankle.

[1] [*Ante*, p. 215.]

[2] *Misc. Works*, i., 310, 316.—SHEFFIELD. [*Corres.*, ii., 221, 233. In *Misc. Works*, i., 310, the date 1790 is wrong. The letter was an answer to Lord Sheffield's of 3rd Jan., 1791.]

I must ever regard it as the most endearing proof of his sensibility, and of his possessing the true spirit of friendship, that after having relinquished the thought of his intended visit, he hastened to England, in spite of increasing impediments, to soothe me by the most generous sympathy, and to alleviate my domestic affliction[1]; neither his great corpulency,[2] nor his extraordinary bodily infirmities, nor any other consideration, could prevent him a moment from resolving on an undertaking that might have deterred the most active young man. With an alertness by no means natural to him, he, almost immediately, undertook a circuitous journey, along the frontiers of an enemy, worse than savage, within the sound of their cannon, within the range of the light troops of the different armies, and through roads ruined by the enormous machinery of war.[3]

[1] [For the death of Lady Sheffield see *ante*, p. 239, *n.*

Sainte-Beuve says of Gibbon's letters to the widower on hearing the sad news: "Quelques lettres même, les dernières, ont des accents d'émotion qu'on n'attendrait pas; celle qu'il écrit à lord Sheffield à la première nouvelle de son malheur, et au moment de partir pour le rejoindre, est belle et touchante; on dirait presque qu'un éclair de religion y a passé" (*Causeries*, viii., 471).

The following is the passage which touched Sainte-Beuve: "But she is now at rest; and if there be a future state her mild virtues have surely entitled her to the reward of pure and perfect felicity" (*Corres.*, ii., 378).

Lord Sheffield consoled himself by a second wife, and, on losing her, by a third (*Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, pp. 310, 395, *n.*).]

[2] ["Mr. Gibbon," wrote Mme. D'Arblay, "has cheeks of such prodigious chubbiness that they envelope his nose so completely as to render it in profile absolutely invisible. Yet, with these Brobdignatious cheeks his neat little feet are of a miniature description, and with these, as soon as I turned round, he hastily described a quaint sort of circle with small quick steps, and a dapper gait, as if to mark the alacrity of his approach" (*Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, ii., 224).

Sainte-Beuve copies the following description of him by Garat, allowing at the same time that it is overcharged: "L'auteur de la grande et superbe *Histoire de l'Empire romain* avait à peine quatre pieds sept à huit pouces; le tronc immense de son corps à gros ventre de Silène était posé sur cette espèce de jambes grêles qu'on appelle *flûtes;* ses pieds assez en dedans pour que la pointe du droit pût embarrasser souvent la pointe du gauche, étaient assez longs et assez larges pour servir de socle à une statue de cinq pieds six pouces. Au milieu de son visage, pas plus gros que le poing, la racine de son nez s'enfonçait dans le crâne plus profondément que celle du nez d'un Kalmouck, et ses yeux, très vifs, mais très petits, se perdaient dans les mêmes profondeurs" (*Causeries*, viii., 440).]

[3] ["Frankfort, May 19, 1793.—And here I am in good health and spirits, after one of the easiest, safest, and pleasantest journies which I ever performed in my whole life; not the appearance of an enemy, and hardly the appearance of a war. Yet I hear, as I am writing, the cannon of the siege of Mayence, at the

The readiness with which he engaged in this kind office of friendship, at a time when a selfish spirit might have pleaded a thousand reasons for declining so hazardous a journey, conspired, with the peculiar charms of his society, to render his arrival a cordial to my mind. I had the satisfaction of finding that his own delicate and precarious health had not suffered in the service of his friend. He arrived in the beginning of June at my house in Downing Street in good health; and after passing about a month with me there, we settled at Sheffield Place for the remainder of the summer; where his wit, learning, and cheerful politeness delighted a great variety of characters.

Although he was inclined to represent his health as better than it really was, his habitual dislike to motion appeared to increase; his inaptness to exercise confined him to the library and dining-room, and there he joined my friend, Mr. Frederick North,[1] in pleasant arguments against exercise in general.[2] He ridiculed the unsettled and restless disposition

distance of twenty miles, and long, very long, will it be heard" (*Corres.*, ii., 382).

"Brussels, May, 27, 1793.—This day, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, I am arrived at this place in excellent preservation. My expedition, which is now drawing to a close, has been a journey of perseverance rather than speed, of some labour since Frankfort, but without the smallest degree of difficulty or danger. As I have every morning been seated in the chaise soon after sun-rise, I propose indulging to-morrow till eleven o'clock, and going that day no farther than Ghent. On Wednesday the 29th instant I shall reach Ostend in good time, just eight days, according to my former reckoning, from Frankfort" (*ib.*, p. 383).]

[1] [Third son of the Prime Minister; afterwards fifth Earl of Guilford. Lord Sheffield's elder daughter, in the autumn of 1793, thus writes of him and Sylvester Douglas (mentioned below), afterwards Lord Glenbervie: "Mr. Douglas with his Greek and Latin, and Fred North with his Islands of Ithaca and Corfu, have put him [Gibbon] quite in good humour, and they are much more entertaining, having him to draw them out. . . . It was impossible to have selected three beaux who could have been more agreeable, whether their conversation was serious or trifling" (*Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, pp. 239, 242).]

[2] [Gibbon after describing his failure in the riding-school (*ante*, p. 86) continued: "Many precious hours were employed in my closet which, at the same age, are wasted on horseback by the strenuous idleness of my countrymen" (*Auto.*, p. 236).

On July 2, 1793, Miss Holroyd wrote: "Gibbon is a mortal enemy to any persons taking a walk" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 225).

"Gibbon had been staying some time with Lord Sheffield in the country; and when he was about to go away, the servants could not find his hat. 'Bless me,' said Gibbon, 'I certainly left it in the hall on my arrival here.' He had

that summer, the most uncomfortable, as he said, of all seasons, generally gives to those who have the free use of their limbs. Such arguments were little required to keep society, Mr. Jekyll,[1] Mr. Douglas, etc., within doors, when his company was only there to be enjoyed; for neither the fineness of the season, nor the most promising parties of pleasure, could tempt the company of either sex to desert him.

Those who have enjoyed the society of Mr. Gibbon will agree with me, that his conversation was still more captivating than his writings. Perhaps no man ever divided time more fairly between literary labour and social enjoyment; and hence, probably he derived his peculiar excellence of making his very extensive knowledge contribute, in the highest degree, to the use or pleasure of those with whom he conversed. He united, in the happiest manner imaginable, two characters which are not often found in the same person, the profound scholar and the peculiarly agreeable companion. . . .

Excepting a visit to Lord Egremont[2] and Mr. Hayley,[3] whom he particularly esteemed, Mr. Gibbon was not absent from Sheffield Place till the beginning of October, when we

not stirred out of doors during the whole of the visit" (Rogers's *Table-Talk*, p. 115).

His letter showed that he had not, in his latter years, always wholly neglected exercise. At Brighton he wrote in 1781: "I walk sufficiently morning and evening". At Hampton Court he wrote in 1782: "Every morning I walk a mile or more before breakfast" (*Corres.*, ii., 3, 23).]

[1] ["Mr. Jekyll is a great favourite of Mr. G., which is rather surprising, as the latter does not, in general, show a predilection for those who are less qualified for hearers than orators" (*Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, p. 253).

"Jekyll was celebrated for his wit; but it was of that kind which amuses only for the moment. I remember that when Lady Cork gave a party at which she wore a most enormous plume, Jekyll said, 'She was exactly like a shuttle-cock—all *cork* and feathers'" (Rogers's *Table-Talk*, p. 105). For "Jekyll, the wag of law, the scribblers' pride" with "his own book of sarcasms ready made," see *The Rolliad*, ed. 1799, pp. 219, 221.]

[2] [Horace Walpole (to whose niece Lord Egremont got engaged) wrote of him in 1780: "He is eight-and-twenty, is handsome, and has between twenty and thirty thousand a year". Three weeks later Walpole wrote: "I must notify the rupture of our great match. Lord Egremont, who proves a most worthless young fellow, and is as weak and irresolute," etc. (Walpole's *Letters*, vii., 414, 421).

Gibbon, who in 1775 had found him at Up-Park, "and four score fox-hounds," described him as "civil and sensible" (*Corres.*, i., 247, 249).]

[3] [*Ante*, pp. 180, 230. Miss Holroyd wrote on August 2, 1793: "'Le grand Gibbon' arrived yesterday from Mr. Hayley's" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 227).]

were reluctantly obliged to part with him, that he might perform his engagement to Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, the widow of his father, who had early deserved, and invariably retained, his affection.[1] From Bath he proceeded to Lord Spencer's at Althorp, a family which he always met with uncommon satisfaction.[2] He continued in good health during the whole summer, and in excellent spirits (I never knew him enjoy better); and when he went from Sheffield Place, little did I imagine it would be the last time I should have the inexpressible pleasure of seeing him there in full possession of health.

The few following short letters, though not important in themselves, will fill up this part of the narrative better, and more agreeably, than anything which I can substitute in their place.

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ., *to the Right Hon. Lord* SHEFFIELD.

October 2, 1793.

THE Cork Street hotel has answered its recommendation; it is clean, convenient, and quiet. My first evening was passed at home in a very agreeable *tête-à-tête* with my friend Elmsley.[3] Yesterday I dined at Craufurd's[4] with an excellent set, in which were Pelham[5] and Lord Egremont. I dine

[1] [*Ante*, p. 113. On his way to Althorp he passed a night at the Star Inn (now the Clarendon Hotel), Oxford (*Corres.*, ii., 391).]

[2] [Earl Spencer and his wife stayed a month at Lausanne in 1785. "He is a valuable man," wrote Gibbon, "and where he is familiar, a pleasant companion; she a charming woman, who, with sense and spirit, has the simplicity and playfulness of a child" (*ib.*, ii., 135). How "valuable" he was he showed later on as First Lord of the Admiralty. Though he was not in office at the time of Nelson's last and greatest victory, nevertheless it might be said of him, the descendant of Marlborough, that with Pitt he

"bade the conqueror go forth
And launched that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar".

"She used playfully to call Nelson her bull-dog" (*Memoir of Viscount Althorp*, p. 20). She had known Johnson (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 425, *n.*).]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 194.]

[4] [*Post*, p. 265.]

[5] [Probably Thomas Pelham, afterwards second Earl of Chichester (*Corres.*, ii., 60).]

to-day with my Portuguese friend, Madame de Sylva,[1] at Grenier's; most probably with Lady Webster,[2] whom I met last night at Devonshire-House; a constant, though late, resort of society. The Duchess[3] is as good, and Lady Elizabeth as seducing as ever. No news whatsoever. You will see in the papers Lord Hervey's memorial. I love vigour, but it is surely a strong measure to tell a gentleman you have *resolved* to pass the winter in his house.[4] London is not disagreeable; yet I shall probably leave it Saturday. If any thing should occur, I will write. Adieu; ever yours.

To the same.

Sunday afternoon I left London and lay at Reading, and Monday in very good time I reached this place, after a very pleasant airing; and am always so much delighted and improved, with this union of ease and motion, that, were not the expense enormous, I would travel every year some hundred miles, more especially in England.[5] I passed the day with

[1] [A pretty Portuguese, with whom, according to Miss Holroyd, Gibbon was "desperately in love" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 82).]

[2] [In the original, "with the well-washed feet of Lady W." (*Corres.*, ii., 388). For the explanation of this see *The Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, p. 239. In 1797, being divorced from her husband, she married the third Lord Holland (*Annual Register*, 1797, ii., 10). She is described in that passage where Macaulay, writing of Holland House, tells how "the last survivors of our generation with peculiar fondness will recall that venerable chamber, in which all the antique gravity of a college library was so singularly blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room" (Macaulay's *Essays*, ed. 1874, iii., 285).]

[3] [The beautiful Duchess of Devonshire whom Reynolds and Gainsborough painted.]

[4] [Lord Hervey, the English Minister at Florence, in a Memorial published in *The Morning Chronicle*, Oct. 2, 1793, required that the French Minister should be dismissed, and that all trade with France should cease. The English fleet would enforce obedience, if necessary, and at the same time would protect the Tuscan ships.]

[5] ["In the afternoon, as we were driven rapidly along in the post-chaise, Dr. Johnson said to me, 'Life has not many things better than this'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 453).

In Paterson's *British Itinerary*, ed. 1800, Preface, p. 7, the price of a post-chaise and pair is stated to be nine pence a mile, but in many places two pence, three pence, four pence more. To this was added the government duty of three pence per mile, and the driver's payment of a shilling or eighteen pence for each stage of ten or twelve miles. In addition to this there were turnpike tolls, and the payments to ostlers. In the *Penny Cyclopædia* for 1840 (xviii., 460) the total

Mrs. G. yesterday. In mind and conversation she is just the same as twenty years ago. She has spirits, appetite, legs, and eyes, and talks of living till ninety.[1] I can say from my heart, Amen.[2] We dine at two, and remain together till nine; but, although we have much to say, I am not sorry that she talks of introducing a third or fourth actor. Lord Spenser expects me about the 20th; but if I can do it without offence, I shall steal away two or three days sooner, and you shall have advice of my motions. The troubles of Bristol have been serious and bloody. I know not who was in fault; but I do not like appeasing the mob by the extinction of the toll, and the removal of the Hereford militia, who had done their duty.[3] Adieu. The girls must dance at Tunbridge. What would dear little aunt[4] say if I was to answer her letter? Ever yours, etc.

York House, Bath, October 9, 1793.

I still follow the old style, though the Convention has abolished the Christian æra, with months, weeks, days, etc.[5]

To the same.

York House, Bath, October 13, 1793.

I am as ignorant of Bath in general as if I were still at Sheffield. My impatience to get away makes me think it

cost is given as one shilling and ten pence a mile. As Bath is 107 miles from London the charge for posting alone would, at this rate, have amounted to nearly £10. To this must be added the charges of the inns. Gibbon lay one night at Reading, and took two servants with him.]

[1] She was then in her eightieth year.—Sheffield.

[2] [*Ante*, p. 113, *n.* 2.]

[3] [The trustees of the bridge tolls, in letting them a year earlier, had given notice that they were to be levied for the last time. Nevertheless they were continued. The mob three days running destroyed the gates; the militia fired; "about fifteen persons were killed, and near forty wounded". "The tolls were abandoned; some of the principal citizens having offered to present to the trustees the sum for which they were let." Nevertheless the mob broke the windows of the Town-House, but dispersed on the arrival of more troops (*Ann. Reg.*, 1793, ii., 45).]

[4] [Lord Sheffield's sister, Sarah Martha Holroyd, the Aunt "Serena" of *The Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd.*]

[5] [On Sept. 20, 1793, the Convention decreed that "the common or vulgar era is abolished" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1793, ii., 41).]

better to devote my whole time to Mrs. G.[1]; and dear little aunt, whom I tenderly salute, will excuse me to her two friends, Mrs. Hartley and Preston, if I make little or no use of her kind introduction. A *tête-à-tête* of eight or nine hours every day is rather difficult to support; yet I do assure you, that our conversation flows with more ease and spirit when we are alone, than when any auxiliaries are summoned to our aid. She is indeed a wonderful woman, and I think all her faculties of the mind stronger, and more active, than I have ever known them. I have settled, that ten full days may be sufficient for all the purposes of our interview. I should therefore depart next Friday, the eighteenth instant, and am indeed expected at Althorpe on the twentieth; but I may possibly reckon without my host, as I have not yet apprised Mrs. G. of the term of my visit; and will certainly not quarrel with her for a short delay. Adieu. I must have some political speculations. The campaign, at least on our side, seems to be at an end.[2] Ever yours.

To the same.

Althorp Library,[3] Tuesday, four o'clock.

We have so completely exhausted this morning among the first editions of Cicero, that I can mention only my departure hence to-morrow, the sixth instant. I shall lie quietly at Woburn, and reach London in good time Thursday. By the following post I will write somewhat more largely. My stay

[1] [When he had got away he wrote to her: "I wish that I could have given myself a larger scope for my visit to Bath" (*Corres.*, ii., 391).]

[2] [The allies under the Duke of York and the Prince of Coburg had been defeated in the Low Countries" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1793, i., 273).]

[3] [At Althorp, "in the spacious suite of rooms Lord Spencer placed that splendid collection of books which alone sufficed to give him a reputation throughout Europe. It was estimated to contain forty or fifty thousand volumes, amongst which were the choicest treasures of bibliography." Once, when he was overworked at the Admiralty, his physician "prescribed a day's cessation from business, and a play of Euripides, which treatment was entirely successful" (*Memoir of Viscount Althorp*, pp. 15-16).

The library has been bought by Mrs. John Rylands of Longford Hall, Stretford, and presented by her to the City of Manchester, together with a building worthy of holding it.]

in London will depend, partly on my amusement, and your being fixed at Sheffield Place; unless you think I can be comfortably arranged for a week or two with you at Brighton. The military remarks seem good; but now to what purpose? Adieu. I embrace and much rejoice in Louisa's improvement. Lord Ossory[1] was from home at Farning Woods.

To the same.

London, Friday, November 8, four o'clock.

Walpole has just delivered yours, and I hasten the direction, that you may not be at a loss. I will write to-morrow, but I am now fatigued, and rather unwell.[2] Adieu. I have not seen a soul except Elmsley.

To the same.

St. James's Street, November 9, 1793.

As I dropt yesterday the word *unwell*, I flatter myself that the family would have been a little alarmed by my silence to-day. I am still awkward, though without any suspicions of gout, and have some idea of having recourse to medical advice. Yet I creep out to-day in a chair, to dine with Lord Lucan.[3] But as it will be literally my first going down stairs, and as scarcely any one is apprised of my arrival, I know nothing, I have heard nothing, I have nothing to say. My present lodging, a house of Elmsley's is cheerful, convenient, somewhat dear, but not so much as a hotel, a species of habitation for which I have not conceived any great affection.[4] Had you

[1] [He was a member of the Literary Club (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 479).]

[2] [Chesterfield wrote on October 8, 1755: "I am what you call in Ireland, and a very good expression I think it is, *unwell*" (Chesterfield's *Misc. Works*, iv., 263). *Unwell* is not in Johnson's *Dictionary*.]

[3] [He was a member of the Literary Club (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 479). He it was who told the story how Johnson said, at the sale of Thrale's brewery: "We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice" (*ib.*, iv., 87).]

[4] [This is one of the earliest instances to be found of the use of *hotel* for *inn*. *Hotel* is not in Johnson's *Dictionary*. Gibbon was not of Johnson's opinion when he said: "No, Sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 452).]

been stationary at Sheffield, you would have seen me before the twentieth; for I am tired of rambling, and pant for my home; that is to say for your house. But whether I shall have courage to brave . . .[1] and a bleak down, time only can discover. Adieu. I wish you back to Sheffield Place. The health of dear Louisa is doubtless the first object; but I did not expect Brighton after Tunbridge. Whenever dear little aunt is separate from you, I shall certainly write to her; but at present how is it possible? Ever yours.

To the same at Brighton.

St. James's Street, November 11, 1793.

I must at length withdraw the veil before my state of health, though the naked truth may alarm you more than a fit of the gout. Have you never observed, through my *inexpressibles,* a large prominency, *circa genitalia,* which, as it was not at all painful, and very little troublesome, I had strangely neglected for many years[2]? But since my departure from Sheffield Place, it has increased (most stupendously), is increasing, and ought to be diminished.[3] Yesterday I sent for Farquhar,[4] who is allowed to be a very skillful surgeon. After

[1] [In the original, P. of W. (*Corres.*, ii., 393). On August 25 Miss Holroyd described a drive across the downs to the Devil's Dyke, near Brighton, to see a field day, where the Prince of Wales commanded the troops. On Nov. 1 she wrote: "If you like an officer there will be plenty at Brighton, for the Prince's Regt. stays there all the winter. I hope we shall not be too fond of the P., and then the residence will not be unpleasant, if we find anybody we know" (*Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, pp. 234, 247). It was her father who was likely to "be too fond of the Prince". See *ib.*, p. 228.]

[2] [Soon after Gibbon's death Malone wrote: "He thought, he said, when he was at Althorp last Christmas [he was there in October] the ladies looked a little oddly. The fact is that poor Gibbon, strange as it may seem, imagined himself rather well-looking, and his first motion in a mixed company of ladies and gentlemen was to the fire-place, against which he planted his back, and then, taking out his snuff-box, began to hold forth. In his late unhappy situation it was not easy for the ladies to find out where they could direct their eyes with safety" (*Hist. MSS. Com.*, 13th Report, App. viii., p. 231).]

[3] [A parody on Dunning's motion (*ante*, p. 207).]

[4] Now Sir Walter Farquhar, Baronet.—Sheffield. [There was another Farquhar, "not of the Faculty," whom nevertheless Gibbon advised young Sévery to consult (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 471). See also *Girlhood of M. J. Holroyd*, pp. 218, 322, 356.]

viewing and palping,[1] he very seriously desired to call in assistance, and has examined it again to-day with Mr. Cline, a surgeon, as he says, of the first eminence.[2] They both pronounce it a *hydrocele* (a collection of water), which must be let out by the operation of tapping; but, from its magnitude and long neglect, they think it a most extraordinary case, and wish to have another surgeon, Dr. Baillie,[3] present. If the business should go off smoothly, I shall be delivered from my burthen (it is almost as big as a small child) and walk about in four or five days with a truss. But the medical gentlemen, who never speak quite plain, insinuate to me the possibility of an inflammation, of fever, etc. I am not appalled at the thoughts of the operation, which is fixed for Wednesday next, twelve o'clock; but it has occurred to me, that you might wish to be present, before and afterwards, till the crisis was past; and to give you that opportunity, I shall solicit a delay till Thursday, or even Friday. In the meanwhile, I crawl about with some labour, and much indecency, to Devonshire House (where I left all the fine ladies making flannel waistcoats[4]); Lady Lucan's, etc. Adieu. Varnish the business for the ladies: yet I am afraid it will be public;—the advantage of being notorious. Ever yours.

[1] [Gibbon anglicises the French *palper*—"toucher avec la main à plusieurs reprises et en pressant légèrement" (Littré). Writing of his proposed retirement to Lausanne he said: "Je me suis livré au charme délicieux de contempler, de sonder, de palper ce bonheur" (*Corres.*, ii., 50).]

[2] [H. C. Robinson (*Diary*, ii., 251) says that when his sister in 1823 consulted Abernethy, finding Cline had seen her, he said: "*Why* come to me then? You need not go to any one after him. He is a sound man."

"Lord Lansdowne told of his having dined with Lord Erskine, just after his recovering from some complaint, of which he had been cured by two leeches; his launching out in praise of those leeches, and at last starting up and ringing the bell, saying, 'I'll show them to you'; the leeches then brought up in a bottle, and sent round the table with the wine. 'I call one of them Cline,' said Lord Erskine, 'and the other Home' (the great surgeons of the day, Mr. Cline and Sir Everard Home)" (*Memoirs of Thomas Moore*, ed. 1854, vi., 243).]

[3] [Baillie was the nephew of John and William Hunter, and the brother of Joanna Baillie.]

[4] For the soldiers in Flanders.—SHEFFIELD. [*The Annual Register*, 1793, i., 5, speaking of "the rigorous winter which was felt throughout Europe," says that the French levies suffered less, "as they had long been used to a course of living that qualified them to endure almost every species of hardship. From the high price of fuel they were particularly inured to the bearing of cold."]

Immediately on receiving the last letter, I went the same day from Brighthelmstone to London, and was agreeably surprised to find that Mr. Gibbon had dined at Lord Lucan's and did not return to his lodgings, where I waited for him till eleven o'clock at night. Those who have seen him within the last eight or ten years, must be surprised to hear that he could doubt, whether his disorder was apparent.[1] When he returned to England in 1787, I was greatly alarmed by a prodigious increase, which I always conceived to proceed from a rupture. I did not understand why he, who had talked with me on every other subject relative to himself and his affairs without reserve, should never in any shape hint at a malady so troublesome; but on speaking to his valet de chambre, he told me, Mr. Gibbon could not bear the least allusion to that subject, and never would suffer him to notice it. I consulted some medical persons, who with me supposing it to be a rupture, were of opinion that nothing could be done, and said that he surely must have had advice, and of course had taken all necessary precautions. He now talked freely with me about his disorder; which, he said, began in the year 1761; that he then consulted Mr. Hawkins,[2] the surgeon, who did not decide whether it was the beginning of a rupture, or an hydrocele; but he desired to see Mr. Gibbon again when he came to town. Mr. Gibbon, not feeling any pain, nor suffering any inconvenience, as he said, never returned to Mr. Hawkins; and although the disorder continued to increase gradually, and of late years very much indeed, he never mentioned it to any person, however incredible it may appear, from 1761 to November 1793.[3] I told him, that I had always

[1] [A fortnight before his death Miss Holroyd wrote: "He seems now to be sensible of the peculiarity of his appearance" (*Girlhood, etc.*, p. 259).]

[2] [Cæsar Hawkins. Horace Walpole, in 1756, describing how Lord Digby was operated on for the stone, says (*Letters*, iii., 9): "He was cut by a new instrument of Hawkins, which reduces an age of torture to but one minute".]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 240, where Gibbon records: "Since I have escaped from the long perils of my childhood the serious advice of a physician has seldom been requisite".

"Mr. Fox had little confidence in medical skill, and less curiosity, even on subjects connected with the health and management of the human body, than on any other. He was consequently very averse to relate symptoms which put

supposed there was no doubt of its being a rupture; his answer was, that he never thought so, and that he, and the surgeons who attended him, were of opinion that it was an hydrocele. It is now certain that it was originally a rupture, and that an hydrocele had lately taken place in the same part; and it is remarkable that his legs, which had been swelled about the ankle, particularly one of them, since he had the erisipelas in 1790, recovered their former shape, as soon as the water appeared in another part, which did not happen till between the time he left Sheffield Place, in the beginning of October, and his arrival at Althorpe, towards the latter end of that month. On the Thursday following the date of his last letter, Mr. Gibbon was tapped for the first time; four quarts of a transparent watery fluid were discharged by that operation. Neither inflammation nor fever ensued; the tumour was diminished to nearly half its size; the remaining part was a soft irregular mass. I had been with him two days before, and I continued with him above a week after the first tapping, during which time he enjoyed his usual spirits; and the three medical gentlemen who attended him will recollect his pleasantry, even during the operation. He was abroad again in a few days, but the water evidently collecting very fast, it was agreed that a second puncture should be made a fortnight after the first. Knowing that I should be wanted at a meeting in the country, he pressed me to attend it, and promised that soon after the second operation was performed he would follow me to Sheffield Place; but before he arrived I received the two following letters:—

Mr. Gibbon *to Lord* Sheffield, *at* Brighton.

St. James's Street, Nov. *25*, 1793.

Though Farquhar has promised to write you a line, I conceive you may not be sorry to hear directly from me. The

him to no immediate inconvenience." He never consulted a physician about the earlier symptoms of an illness which two years later carried him off (Lord Holland's *Memoirs*, etc., i., 250).

Grote "did not regard as of any importance," and so did not show to his doctor, a swelling, which, being neglected, ended his life (*Life of Grote*, p. 326).]

operation of yesterday was much longer, more searching, and more painful than the former ; but it has eased and lightened me to a much greater degree.[1] No inflammation, no fever, a delicious night, leave to go abroad to-morrow, and to go out of town when I please, *en attendant* the future measures of a radical cure. If you hold your intention of returning next Saturday to Sheffield Place, I shall probably join you about the Tuesday following, after having passed two nights at Beckenham.[2] The Devons are going to Bath, and the hospitable Craufurd follows them. I passed a delightful day with Burke ; an odd one with Monsignor Erskine, the Pope's Nuncio. Of public news, you and the papers know more than I do. We seem to have strong sea and land hopes ; nor do I dislike the Royalists having beaten the Sans Culottes, and taken Dol.[3] How many minutes will it take to guillotine the seventy-three new members of the Convention, who are now arrested[4] ? Adieu ; ever yours.

St. James's-St., Nov. 30, 1793.

It will not be in my power to reach Sheffield Place quite so soon as I wished and expected. Lord Auckland informs

[1] Three quarts of the same fluid as before were discharged.—Sheffield.

[2] Eden Farm.—Sheffield. [Lord Auckland lived there. Gibbon, in writing to him to propose his visit, said : "I revere Lady Auckland as a second Eve, the mother of nations" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 495). Lord Sheffield says in a note : "The allusion is to the births of her children in England, America, Ireland, France, Spain and Holland". The second allusion to Eden Farm and to Lord Auckland's family name of Eden he does not notice.]

[3] [In *The Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 25, 1793, news is reported from the Jacobins of Dinan that "the inhabitants of Dol have almost all fled to the fort of Chateauneuf and to Saint Malo. We are going to remove to the latter the 1,200 English prisoners who are here."]

[4] [In the same paper under date of Paris, Nov. 13, Montaut moved that "on the 21st instant the Committee of General Safety give a report on the 73 deputies put in a state of arrest". Gibbon apparently misunderstood the paragraph, which must refer to the Girondins, who had been arrested many months earlier. "Those seventy-three Secret Protesters, suddenly one day, are reported upon, are decreed accused ; the Convention-doors being 'previously shut,' that none implicated might escape" (Carlyle's *French Revolution*, ed. 1857, ii., 276. See also *ib.*, pp. 254, 262). On Oct. 30, "twenty-one of them were guillotined in thirty-seven minutes, between eleven and twelve in the forenoon" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1793, ii., 51). It was the report of what had been done that was now moved for.]

me that he shall be at Lambeth next week, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. I have therefore agreed to dine at Beckenham on Friday. Saturday will be spent there, and unless some extraordinary temptation should detain me another day, you will see me by four o'clock Sunday the ninth of December. I dine to-morrow with the Chancellor at Hampstead,[1] and, what I do not like at this time of the year, without a proposal to stay all night. Yet I would not refuse, more especially as I had denied him on a former day. My health is good; but I shall have a final interview with Farquhar before I leave town. We are still in darkness about Lord Howe and the French ships, but hope seems to preponderate.[2] Adieu. Nothing that relates to Louisa can be forgotten. Ever yours.

To the Same.

St. James's Street, Dec. 6, 1793.
16 du mois Frimaire.

The man tempted me and I did eat[3]—and that man is no less than the Chancellor. I dine to-day, as I intended, at Beckenham; but he recalls me (the third time this week) by a dinner to-morrow (Saturday) with Burke and Windham, which I do not possess sufficient fortitude to resist. Sunday he dismisses me again to the aforesaid Beckenham, but insists on finding me there on Monday, which he will probably do, supposing there should be room and welcome at the Ambassador's.[4] I shall not therefore arrive at Sheffield till Tuesday, the 10th instant, and though you may perceive I do not want society or amusement, I sincerely repine at the delay. You will likewise

[1] [Lord Loughborough (*ante*, p. 207), whom, at the beginning of the year, Gibbon had congratulated on his appointment as Lord Chancellor (*Misc. Works*, ii., 486). His worthless name and ill-earned titles are preserved at Hampstead in Wedderburne Road, Loughborough Road, and Rosslyn Hill.]

[2] [Six months later Lord Howe gained the great victory of the First of June.]

[3] ["The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (*Genesis* iii. 13).]

[4] [Lord Auckland, Ambassador at the Hague.]

derive some comfort from hearing of the spirit and activity of my motions. Farquhar is satisfied, allows me to go, and does not think I shall be obliged to precipitate my return. Shall we never have anything more than hopes and rumours from Lord Howe? Ever yours.

Mr. Gibbon generally took the opportunity of passing a night or two with his friend Lord Auckland,[1] at Eden Farm (ten miles from London), on his passage to Sheffield Place; and notwithstanding his indisposition, he had lately made an excursion thither from London; when he was much pleased by meeting the Archbishop of Canterbury,[2] of whom he expressed an high opinion. He returned to London, to dine with Lord Loughborough, to meet Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, and particularly Mr. Pitt, with whom he was not acquainted; and in his last journey to Sussex, he re-visited Eden Farm, and was much gratified by the opportunity of again seeing, during a whole day, Mr. Pitt, who passed the night there. From Lord Auckland's Mr. Gibbon proceeded to Sheffield Place; and his discourse was never more brilliant, nor more entertaining, than on his arrival. The parallels which he drew, and the comparisons which he made, between the leading men of this country, were sketched in his best manner, and were infinitely interesting. However, this last visit to Sheffield Place became far different from any he had ever made before. That ready, cheerful, various, and illuminating conversation, which we had before admired in him, was not now always to be found in the library or the dining room. He moved with difficulty, and retired from company sooner than he had been used to do. On the twenty-third of December, his appetite began to fail him. He observed to me, that it was a very bad sign *with him* when he could not eat his breakfast, which he had done at all times very heartily;

[1] [George III. described him as "an eternal intriguer" (Stanhope's *Pitt*, iii., 291).]

[2] [Dr. John Moore, Lord Auckland's brother-in-law (*ib.*, iii., 267). See *The Rolliad and Probationary Odes*, ed. 1799, p. 477, where he is mentioned in *A New Ballad entitled and called Billy Eden.*]

and this seems to have been the strongest expression of apprehension that he was ever observed to utter. A considerable degree of fever now made its appearance. Inflammation arose, from the weight and the bulk of the tumour. Water again collected very fast, and when the fever went off, he never entirely recovered his appetite even for breakfast. I became very uneasy indeed at his situation towards the end of the month, and thought it necessary to advise him to set out for London. He had before settled his plan to arrive there about the middle of January. I had company in the house, and we expected one of his particular friends; but he was obliged to sacrifice all social pleasure to the immediate attention which his health required. He went to London on the seventh of January, and the next day I received the following billet; the last he ever wrote:—

EDWARD GIBBON *Esq. to Lord* SHEFFIELD.

ST. JAMES'S STREET, four o'clock, Tuesday.

THIS date says every thing. I was almost killed between Sheffield Place and East Grinsted, by hard, frozen, long and cross ruts, that would disgrace the approach of an Indian wigwam. The rest was something less painful; and I reached this place half dead, but not seriously feverish, or ill. I found a dinner invitation from Lord Lucan; but what are dinners to me? I wish they did not know of my departure. I catch the flying post.[1] What an effort! Adieu, till Thursday or Friday.

By his own desire, I did not follow him till Thursday the ninth. I then found him far from well. The tumour more distended than before, inflamed, and ulcerated in several places. Remedies were applied to abate the inflammation; but it was not thought proper to puncture the tumour for the third time, till Monday the 13th of January, when no less

[1] ["A post in *flying coach*, the ordinary designation for a swift stage coach" (*New Eng. Dict.*, iv., 374).]

than six quarts of fluid were discharged. He seemed much relieved by the evacuation. His spirits continued good. He talked, as usual, of passing his time at houses which he had often frequented with great pleasure, the Duke of Devonshire's, Mr. Craufurd's, Lord Spenser's, Lord Lucan's, Sir Ralph Payne's, and Mr. Batt's; and when I told him that I should not return to the country, as I had intended, he pressed me to go; knowing I had an engagement there on public business, he said, "You may be back on Saturday, and I intend to go on Thursday to Devonshire-House". I had not any apprehension that his life was in danger, although I began to fear that he might not be restored to a comfortable state, and that motion would be very troublesome to him; but he talked of a radical cure. He said, that it was fortunate the disorder had shown itself while he was in England, where he might procure the best assistance; and if a radical cure could not be obtained before his return to Lausanne, there was an able surgeon at Geneva, who could come to tap him when it should be necessary.

On Tuesday the fourteenth, when the risk of inflammation and fever from the last operations was supposed to be over, as the medical gentleman who attended him expressed no fears for his life, I went that afternoon part of the way to Sussex, and the following day reached Sheffield Place. The next morning, the sixteenth, I received by the post a good account of Mr. Gibbon, which mentioned also that he hourly gained strength. In the evening came a letter by express, dated noon that day, which acquainted me that Mr. Gibbon had had a violent attack the preceding night, and that it was not probable he could live till I came to him. I reached his lodgings in St. James's Street about midnight, and learned that my friend had expired a quarter before one o'clock that day, the sixteenth of January, 1794.

After I left him on Tuesday afternoon the fourteenth, he saw some company, Lady Lucan and Lady Spencer, and thought himself well enough at night to omit the opium draught, which he had been used to take for some time. He

slept very indifferently; before nine the next morning he rose, but could not eat his breakfast. However, he appeared tolerably well, yet complained at times of a pain in his stomach. At one o'clock he received a visit of an hour from Madame de Sylva, and at three, his friend, Mr. Craufurd, of Auchinames (for whom he had mentioned a particular regard), called, and stayed with him till past five o'clock. They talked, as usual, on various subjects; and twenty hours before his death, Mr. Gibbon happened to fall into a conversation, not uncommon with him, on the probable duration of his life. He said, that he thought himself a good life for ten, twelve, or perhaps twenty years.[1] About six, he ate the wing of a chicken, and drank three glasses of Madeira.[2] After dinner he became very uneasy and impatient; complained a good deal, and appeared so weak, that his servant was alarmed. Mr. Gibbon had sent to his friend and relation, Mr. Robert Darell,[3] whose house was not far distant, desiring to see him, and adding, that he had something particular to say. But, unfortunately, this desired interview never took place.

During the evening he complained much of his stomach, and of a disposition to vomit. Soon after nine, he took his opium draught, and went to bed. About ten, he complained of much pain, and desired that warm napkins might be applied to his stomach. He almost incessantly expressed a sense of pain till about four o'clock in the morning, when he said he found his stomach much easier. About seven the servant asked, whether he should send for Mr. Farquhar? he answered no; that he was as well as he had been the day before. At about half-past eight, he got out of bed, and said

[1] [*Ante*, p. 243.]

[2] [Miss Holroyd wrote on Jan. 11 (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 260): "The surgeons ordered bark every six hours, and five glasses of Madeira at dinner". General Read, in 1879, was shown by M. de Sévery, in his house at Lausanne (33 Rue de Bourg), "twenty bottles of Gibbon's own Madeira. In 1874 the wine was found to be still in excellent condition" (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 475).]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 26, *n.* His brother Edward was one of Gibbon's executors (*post*, p. 268). One of the Darells Gibbon consulted about his investments (*Corres.*, ii., 376).]

he was *plus adroit* than he had been for three months past, and got into bed again, without assistance, better than usual. About nine, he said that he would rise. The servant, however, persuaded him to remain in bed till Mr. Farquhar, who was expected at eleven, should come. Till about that hour he spoke with great facility. Mr. Farquhar came at the time appointed, and he was then visibly dying. When the *valet de chambre* returned, after attending Mr. Farquhar out of the room, Mr. Gibbon said, "*Pourquoi est-ce que vous me quittez ?*" This was about half-past eleven. At twelve, he drank some brandy and water from a teapot, and desired his favourite servant to stay with him. These were the last words he pronounced articulately. To the last he preserved his senses: and when he could no longer speak, his servant having asked a question, he made a sign, to show that he understood him. He was quite tranquil, and did not stir; his eyes half-shut. About a quarter before one, he ceased to breathe.[1]

The *valet de chambre* observed, that Mr. Gibbon did not, at any time, show the least sign of alarm, or apprehension of death; and it does not appear that he ever thought himself in danger, unless his desire to speak to Mr. Darell may be considered in that light.

Perhaps I dwell too long on these minute and melancholy circumstances. Yet the close of such a life can hardly fail to interest every reader[2]; and I know that the public has received a different and erroneous account of my friend's last hours.

I can never cease to feel regret that I was not by his side at this awful period: a regret so strong, that I can express it only by borrowing (as Mr. Mason has done on a similar occasion[3]) the forcible language of Tacitus: *Mihi præter acer-*

[1] [For the surgeon's *post-mortem* report see *Misc. Works*, i., 424.]

[2] [Hannah More recorded on Jan. 19, 1794: "Heard of the death of Mr. Gibbon, the calumniator of the despised Nazarene, the derider of Christianity. Awful dispensation! He too was my acquaintance. Lord, I bless Thee, considering how much infidel acquaintance I have had, that my soul never came into their secret! How many souls have his writings polluted! Lord preserve others from their contagion!"]

[3] [Mason's *Gray's Works*, ed. 1807, ii., 319.]

bitatem amici *erepti, auget mœstitiam quod assidere valetudini, fovere deficientem, satiari vultu, complexu, non contigit.*[1] It is some consolation to me, that I did not, like Tacitus, by a long absence, anticipate the loss of my friend several years before his decease. Although I had not the mournful gratification of being near him on the day he expired, yet during his illness I had not failed to attend him with that assiduity which his genius, his virtues, and, above all, our long uninterrupted, and happy friendship sanctioned and demanded.

[1] [In the original: "Sed mihi filiæque ejus præter acerbitatem parentis erepti," etc. (Tacitus, *Agricola*, c. xlv.). "As for me and thy daughter, besides all the bitterness of a father's loss, it increases our sorrow that it was not permitted us to watch over thy failing health, to comfort thy weakness, to satisfy ourselves with those looks, those embraces" (Church & Brodribb).]

POSTSCRIPT

Mr. Gibbon's Will is dated the 1st of October, 1791, just before I left Lausanne; he distinguishes me, as usual, in the most flattering manner:—

"I constitute and appoint the Right Honourable John Lord Sheffield, Edward Darell, Esquire, and John Thomas Batt, Esquire, to be the Executors of this my last Will and Testament; and as the execution of this trust will not be attended with much difficulty or trouble, I shall indulge these gentlemen, in the pleasure of this last disinterested service, without wronging my feelings, or oppressing my heir, by too light or too weighty a testimony of my gratitude. My obligations to the long and active friendship of Lord Sheffield, I could never sufficiently repay." [1]

He then observes, that the Right Hon. Lady Eliot, of Port Eliot, is his nearest relation on the father's side [2]; but that her three sons are in such prosperous circumstances, that he may well be excused for making the two children of his late uncle, Sir Stanier Porten,[3] his heirs; they being in a very different situation. He bequeaths annuities to two old servants, three thousand pounds, and his furniture, plate,

[1] ["Serena" Holroyd wrote the day after his death: "I have not time to write his own words to account for leaving the executors nothing, though it is expressed well, and we cannot doubt his regard for my brother" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 265).

Lord Sheffield's daughter shows how useful his friendship had been to her father: "He is a particular loss to papa. There is no other person who has half the influence that poor man had. The best sense was always guided by the best judgment. . . . Of what unspeakable consequence would his cool and unprejudiced advice have been to him at this critical time. . . . Even he could not entirely prevent papa from taking some steps that he thought imprudent; but he had power to restrain him in some of his impetuosities; but this friend gone, who is there who has the least influence over him?" (*Girlhood*, etc., pp. 266, 269.)]

[2] [*Ante*, p. 21.]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 26, *n.* 3.]

etc., at Lausanne, to Mr. Wilhelm de Severy[1]; one hundred guineas to the poor of Lausanne, and fifty guineas each to the following persons: Lady Sheffield and daughters, Maria and Louisa, Madame and Mademoiselle de Severy, the Count de Schomberg,[2] Mademoiselle la Chanoinesse de Polier,[3] and M. le Ministre Le Vade,[4] for the purchase of some token which may remind them of a sincere friend.[5]

[1] [*Ante*, p. 236, *n.* Gibbon in his will says of him, "whom I wish to style by the endearing name of son" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 474). The Severy family preserve in their Château of Mex "a quantity of Gibbon's letter-paper, with the blotting-paper and quill pens in daily use" (*ib.*, p. 471). In their house at Lausanne, 33 Rue de Bourg, is "a fine kit-cat of him" (*ib.*, p. 474).]

[2] [Gibbon mentions him in 1790 among the French exiles. "He is a man of the world, of letters, and of sufficient age, since in 1753 he succeeded to Marshal Saxe's regiment of Dragoons" (*Corres.*, ii., 223).]

[3] [Deyverdun mentions some members of this family as among those who, at Lausanne, "font un fonds de bonne compagnie dont on ne se lasse point" (*ib.*, ii., 43).]

[4] [He had arranged Gibbon's library (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 66).]

[5] [By a will made in 1788 he left his step-mother an annuity of £200 over and above her jointure (*Auto.*, p. 421). In 1769 he had written to his father: "Should Mrs. G. still object to the increase of her jointure, I must leave it as an engagement not of law, but of honour, of gratitude and of inclination" (*Gibbon Corres.*, i., 104). "Serena" Holroyd wrote soon after his death: "She is grieved at not being named in the will. . . . She is not angry, but affectionately grieved" (*Girlhood*, etc., p. 280).

The original of this will is at the end of the Gibbon MSS. in the British Museum. The signature has been cut out, the gap being skilfully concealed.]

APPENDIX

1. GENTILITY AND TRADE (p. 9).

Gibbon, in *The Decline*, vi., 259, under date of A.D. 1099, says of Peter the Hermit: "He was born of a gentleman's family (for we must now adopt a modern idiom)".

"Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation like ours that the younger sons, though incapable of any liberal art or profession, may be placed in such a way of life as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family; accordingly, we find several citizens that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes rising, by an honest industry, to greater estates than those of their elder brothers" (Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 108).

Voltaire wrote from England in 1731: "Le cadet d'un pair du royaume ne dédaigne point le négoce. Mylord Townshend, ministre d'état, a un frère qui se contente d'être marchand dans la Cité. Dans le temps que mylord Oxford gouvernait l'Angleterre, son cadet était facteur à Alep. . . . Cette coutume, qui pourtant commence trop à se passer, paraît monstrueuse à des Allemands entêtés de leurs quartiers; ils ne sauraient concevoir que le fils d'un pair d'Angleterre ne soit qu'un riche et puissant bourgeois, au lieu qu'en Allemagne tout est prince" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, ed. 1819, xxiv., 44). For Nathanael Harley, of Aleppo, see Collins's *Peerage*, ed. 1756, iii., 303. Thomas Harley, Lord Mayor of London in 1768, was the son of the third Earl of Oxford.

"An English merchant," said Johnson, "is a new species of gentleman" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 491, *n.*). Boswell himself, after stating the claims made for this "new system of gentility," continues: "Such are the specious, but false arguments for a proposition which always will find numerous advocates, in a nation where men are every day starting up from obscurity to wealth. To refute them is needless. The general sense of mankind cries out, with irresistible force, 'Un gentilhomme est toujours gentilhomme'."

Blackstone (*Commentaries*, ed. 1775, ii., 215) includes among "the inconveniences that attend the splitting of estates, the inducing younger sons to take up with the business and idleness of a country life, instead of being serviceable to themselves and the public by engaging in mercantile, in military, in civil, or in ecclesiastical employments".

"The merchant is the friend of mankind" (*The Decline*, v., 324).

2. WILLIAM LAW (p. 21).

(*a*) Law a Nonjuror.

Law as Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, "being called upon, soon after the accession of George I., to take the oaths prescribed by Act of

Parliament, and to sign the Declaration, refused to do so; in consequence of which he vacated his fellowship" (Law's *Serious Call*, ed. 1814; preface, p. 1). Thomas Hearne, in like manner, was deprived of his post as Second Keeper of the Bodleian (Hearne's *Remains*, iii., 192). The oaths were those of supremacy by which "the Pope's pretended authority" was renounced, and of abjuration by which any claim of the Pretender was renounced. It had to be taken "by all persons in any office, trust, or employment" (Blackstone's *Commentaries*, ed. 1775, i., 368).

Johnson, in his *Life of Fenton*, describes that poet's "refusing to qualify himself for public employment by the oaths required" as "perverseness of integrity". See also Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 321, for his ill opinion of the nonjurors; and Hearne's *Remarks and Collections*, ed. C. E. Doble, Preface, p. 6, for Professor Mayor's defence of them.

Swift advised a Jacobite friend to comply with the law. "For my own part," he wrote, "I do not see any law of God or man forbidding us to give security to the powers that be; and private men are not to trouble themselves about titles to Crowns, whatever may be their particular opinions. The abjuration is understood as the law stands; and, as the law stands, none has title to the Crown but the present possessor" (Swift's *Letters to Chetwode*, p. 87).

(*b*) Law's Attacks on the Stage.

It was in *The Absolute Unlawfulness of Stage Entertainments fully Demonstrated* that Law attacked the Stage. Gibbon refers to the following passages (pp. 14, 18, 42): "The Play-House is as certainly the House of the Devil as the Church is the House of God. . . . It belongs to the Devil, and is the Place of his Honour. . . . The Place of the Devil's Abode, where he holds his filthy Court of evil Spirits. . . . An Entertainment, where he was at the Head of it; where the whole of it was in order to his Glory. . . . A Place that as certainly belongs to the Devil as the heathen Temples of old, where wanton Hymns were sung to Venus, and drunken Songs to the God of Wine. . . . You must consider that all the Laughter there is not only vain and foolish, but that it is a Laughter amongst Devils, that you are upon profane Ground, and hearing Musick in the very Porch of Hell." Law went on to maintain that "the Stage never has *one* innocent play".

For John Dennis's argument in defence of the Stage see Overton's *Law*, p. 38.

(*c*) Law and the Bangorian Controversy.

In 1709 "one Hoadley, a pious and judicious divine," in a sermon before the Lord Mayor, maintained "that it was not only lawful, but a duty incumbent on all men, to resist bad and cruel governors" (Burnet's *Hist. of His Own Time*, iv., 229). When the House of Commons impeached Sacheverell, an address was voted to the Queen, "that she would be graciously pleased to bestow some dignity in the Church on Mr. Hoadly, for his eminent services both to the Church and State". She answered "that she would take a proper opportunity to comply with their desires; which, however, she never did" (*Parl. Hist.*, vi., 808). Soon after the accession of George I. he was rewarded with the Bishopric of Bangor, worth, according to Whiston, £800 a year. He held it "for six entire years," Whiston adds, "without ever seeing that diocese in his life; to the great scandal of religion" (*Life of W. Whiston*, ed. 1749, p. 244). In 1717 a sermon and another publication of his were condemned by a Committee of Convocation. The Government stopped further proceedings by a prorogation. From that date till 1861 Convocation was never allowed to meet as a deliberative body (*Johnsonian Miscellanies*, ii., 369, *n.*, and Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 464).

Hoadley was promoted from Bangor, through Hereford and Salisbury, to Winchester, while his brother was made Archbishop of Armagh. "He was preached and wrote against all over the kingdom," said the Nonjuror Hearne, "occasioned chiefly by a penny sermon of his, which, had they let it alone, would have died in a fortnight's time; to such little beginnings do some men owe their rise" (Hearne's *Remains*, iii., 157).

"In 1717 Law wrote his *Three Letters to the Bishop of Bangor*. . . . Dean Hook said 'they have never been answered, and may indeed be regarded as unanswerable' (*Church Dictionary:* Art. *Bangorian Controversy*)" (Overton's *Law*, p. 19).

In June, 1735, Hoadley published anonymously *A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (*Gent. Mag.*, 1735, p. 335). In *Auto.*, p. 25, Gibbon has the following note on this work: "By the pen of an angel, says Adams (I.A.L., i. c. 17)—I think out of character". The reference is to Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, liber 1, caput 17. Parson Adams says: "If you mean by the clergy some few designing factious men, who have it at heart to establish some favourite schemes at the price of the liberty of mankind, and the very essence of religion, it is not in the power of such persons to decry any book they please; witness that excellent book called *A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament;* a book written (if I may venture on the expression) with the pen of an angel".

Law's answer, *A Demonstration of the Gross and Fundamental Errors*, &c., was published in April, 1737 (*Gent. Mag.*, 1737, p. 257).

(*d*) Law and "The Fable of the Bees".

Law's answer was entitled: *Remarks upon a Late Book entitled the Fable of the Bees*, &c., 1724, 80. F. D. Maurice edited it in 1844, at the request of John Sterling, who wrote to him: "The first section is one of the most remarkable philosophical essays I have ever seen in English. You probably know Law as perhaps the most perfect of controversial writers, whether right or wrong in his argument" (Preface, p. 1).

"Everything, according to Mandeville," wrote Adam Smith, "is luxury which exceeds what is absolutely necessary for the support of human nature, so that there is vice even in the use of a clean shirt, or of a convenient habitation. . . . Though his system, perhaps, never gave occasion to more vice than what would have been without it, at least it taught that vice which arose from other causes to appear with more effrontery, and to avow the corruption of its motives with a profligate audaciousness which had never been heard of before" (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ii., 270, 274).

Fielding makes Miss Matthews, a woman of loose character, praise "that charming fellow, Mandeville" (*Amelia*, Bk. iii., ch. 5).

Gibbon himself shows the influence of Mandeville when he maintains that "luxury, though it may proceed from vice or folly, seems to be the only means that can correct the unequal distribution of property" (*The Decline*, i., 53). See also Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 292.

(*e*) Law's "Serious Call".

Johnson, who read the *Serious Call* at College, said: "I found Law quite an overmatch for me" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 68). "The *Serious Call*," he said, "was the finest piece of hortatory theology in any language" (*ib.*, ii., 122). "William Law, Sir," he said, "wrote the best piece of Paranetick Divinity, but William Law was no reasoner" (*ib.*, iv., 287, *n.*). Mrs. Thrale, in one of her "studied epistles" (*ib.*, iii., 421), wrote to Johnson: "You used to say you would not trust me with that author upstairs on the dressing-room shelf, yet I now half wish I had never followed any precepts but his" (*Piozzi Letters*, ii., 214).

Hannah More (*Memoirs*, ii., 435) recommended the *Serious Call* to the Earl of Orford (Horace Walpole) and some ladies as "a book that their favourite Mr. Gibbon had highly praised. They have promised to read it; and I know they will be less afraid of Gibbon's recommendation than of mine".

The chapters in which Gibbon said that his two aunts are described are the seventh and eighth. They have the following titles: "*How the imprudent use of an estate corrupts all the tempers of the mind, and fills the heart with poor and ridiculous passions, through the whole course of life; represented in the character of Flavia.*" "*How the wise and pious use of an estate naturally carrieth us to great perfection in all the virtues of the Christian life; represented in the character of Miranda.*" The *Serious Call* was published in 1729, seven years before Mr. Gibbon's death, when Hester Gibbon was twenty-five years old. Nevertheless, Flavia and Miranda are described as having had the management of their estates for twenty years; so that if Gibbon's aunts resembled them, it must have been by imitation on their part, and not on the part of the author.

3. GIBBON'S KINSMEN THE ACTONS (p. 24).

Edward Acton, who was the great-grandson of the second baronet, Sir Walter Acton, by his second son Walter, attended at Besançon Gibbon's father, who was the great-grandson of the same baronet by his third son Richard. Edward Acton's eldest son, John, "a naval officer in the service of Leopold of Tuscany, was sent for to organise the Neapolitan army and navy. He was made general, then captain-general of the kingdom, and, lastly, premier, or rather sole-minister (for the other ministers were merely his creatures), and in this office he remained many years. His administration was neither so economical nor so wise as that of Tanucci, his predecessor. . . . Yet a considerable degree of liberty of speech, and even of the press, prevailed, and the country was prosperous and the people contented until the French Revolution, of which Naples felt the shock" (*Penny Cyclo.*, x., 230). He died in 1811.

Lord Holland, who visited Naples in January, 1794, says that "the suspicious policy of the court, under the guidance of the Queen and General Acton, had peopled the prisons with those of their subjects most eminent for birth, manners, or acquirements" (*Memoirs of the Whig Party*, ed. 1852, i., 55).

In 1791 General Acton succeeded to the family title as sixth baronet. One of his sons, who was born nine years after the historian's death, became a Cardinal. The present Lord Acton is the General's grandson.

The General's uncle at Leghorn was Richard Acton. Gibbon, who visited him at Pisa, recorded on 24th September, 1764: "Je plains beaucoup ce pauvre vieillard. A l'âge de soixante ans, il se trouve abandonné de tous les Anglais, pour avoir changé de religion; accablé d'infirmité, sans espérance de revoir son pays, il se fixe parmi un peuple dont il n'a jamais pu apprendre la langue" (*Misc. Works*, i., 195). See also *Corres.*, i., 37.

4. THE BOROUGH OF PETERSFIELD (p. 25).

"Edward Gibbon, father [grandfather] of *the* Gibbon, bought Petersfield in 1719. In 1739 it passed by purchase to the Jolliffe family" (Woodward's *Hist. of Hampshire*, iii., 320). If the date, 1739, is correct, it was not, as Gibbon says, his grandfather (he died in 1736) who "alienated such important property," but his father. Whoever it was, it was not Petersfield that he possessed, but "a weighty share" in it. The grandfather never represented

the borough. His son was once member, at the general election of 1735. As Sir W. Jolliffe was the other member (*Parl. Hist.*, ix., 626), he most likely was the co-owner, till by purchase he acquired the entire interest. The Gibbons still retained "the estate and manor of Beriton, otherwise Buriton, near Petersfield" (*ante*, p. 116).

The advantage of being the owner of a borough that was "a burgage tenure" is shown in *The Probationary Odes*, ed. 1799, p. 302, where it is said of Warren Hastings's wife :—

> "Oh ! Pitt, with awe behold that precious throat,
> Whose necklace teems with many a future vote !
> Pregnant with *Burgage* gems each hand she rears."

Pitt, in his Reform Bill of 1785, proposed to compensate the owners of thirty-six small boroughs, which were to be disfranchised, at the cost (it was said) of £1,000,000 (*Parl. Hist.*, xxv., 442, 445).

On 11th May, 1820, the freeholders of Petersfield petitioned the House of Commons against the return of Hylton Jolliffe and Baron Hotham. The Mayor, they said, the Rev. J. Whicher, who acted as Returning Officer, "had been elected at a Court Leet nominated by the Steward of the Court Leet, of which Jolliffe claims to be the Lord, whereas he ought to be elected at such Court Leet by a jury selected by the Bailiff of the Borough".

In a later petition, presented on 16th November, 1830, the same complaints were made. The Steward, it was added, was the solicitor of the Lord of the Manor. Freeholders had their votes rejected because "they were not in possession of their title deeds, although they had for several years been in possession of the property for which they claimed to vote, and as evidence of their title had tendered attested copies of the deeds which Hylton Jolliffe and his solicitor refused to produce, though they admitted that they were in his possession as the owner of the largest portion of the property held under the same title". The petitioners added that "the votes of many persons were received who were not the *bona fide* owners of freehold tenements, but merely possessed of estates fraudulently and collusively conveyed to them by Jolliffe, in order to qualify them to vote".

The petitioners of 1820 had maintained that "the right of voting is in the Burgesses (being the inhabitants, householders paying scot and lot), and in the freeholders of lands in general, and in freeholders of ancient dwelling-houses or shambles, or dwelling-houses or shambles built upon ancient foundations, within the Borough, not restricted to houses or shambles of burgage tenure". The Select Committee of the House of Commons reported that "the right of election is in the freeholders of lands or ancient dwelling-houses or shambles, or dwelling-houses or shambles built upon ancient foundations within the Borough, such lands and dwelling-houses being entire ancient tenements".

A second committee sitting the following year made a report on 30th May in the same words, with the exception that the last two lines ran "such lands, dwelling houses, and shambles not being restricted to entire ancient tenements". All three committees rejected the petitions, leaving the Lord of the Manor full power to elect whom he pleased.

Blackstone says (*Commentaries*, ed. 1775, ii., 82): "Where the right of election is by burgage tenure, that alone is a proof of the antiquity of the borough. Tenure in burgage therefore, or burgage tenure, is where houses or lands which were formerly the site of houses, in an ancient borough, are held of some lord in common socage, by a certain established rent."

5. PHÆDRUS (p. 36).

Pattison, describing Casaubon's reception in Paris "by the best set in the capital," continues : "This circle of men, a society such as even Paris has not

been able to produce again, consisted chiefly of members of the bar, or magistrature. Their centre of resort was the house of J. A. de Thou [Thuanus, *ante*, p. 6], the historian, president of the court of parlement. Their presiding genius had been Pierre Pithou, who was just lost to them by death, 1596" (*Isaac Casaubon*, ed. 1892, p. 115).

Pithou had been a Protestant. "Having escaped almost miraculously from the massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, he secured his future safety by turning Papist" (Monk's *Life of Bentley*, ii., 236).

Monk (*ib.*, ii., 230) says of Bentley's edition of *Phædrus*: "Never did he more expose himself to the attacks of enemies than when, at the suggestion of pique and resentment, he launched this puny and meagre performance into the troubled waters of criticism. . . . It terminated his friendship with his old correspondent Burman. This indefatigable scholar had already printed three editions of the Fabulist. He was filled with amazement at the numerous and daring changes of the text." In a fourth edition by reprinting the *Epistola Critica*, in which Hare had reviewed Bentley's notes, he gave great offence (*ib.*, p. 235).

"Burman," wrote Gibbon, "was a mere critic, without being (in my opinion) a good one, since a good critic must reason well; and Burman never could reason at all" (*Misc. Works*, v., 224). Johnson published a brief life of him in *The Gent. Mag.* for 1742, p. 206; reprinted in Johnson's *Works*, vi., 396. See also *ante*, p. 59.

6. FAIRY TALE ENGRAVED IN GIBBON'S MEMORY (p. 38).

The tale is in *Hypolitus, Earl of Douglas* (London, 1708), a translation of *Hypolite, Comte de Duglas*, by M. C. La Mothe, Countess d'Aulnoy (Lyon, 1699). "The faithful Hypolitus" in pursuit of "the most admirable Julia" arrived at an Abbey, where the Abbess asked him to tell a story. He told how the Russian King, Adolph, losing his way in hunting, arrived at the Cave of the Winds. Zephyrus bore him away to the Isle of Felicity, where he was entertained by the Princess. One day she asked him how long he thought he had been there. "I think it cannot be much less than three months," he replied. She burst out laughing. "Dear Adolph," said she with a very serious air, "you must know it is no less than three hundred years." He was struck with shame at having done no glorious action in all that time, and insisted on leaving her to render himself more worthy of her favours. She gave him a horse which would bear him safely home so long as he did not touch the ground before he reached his own country. In the way lay a cart overthrown, laden with wings of divers shapes and sizes, and by it the carter, a very old man, who called for help. The King alighted, when up sprang the old man, calling out: "At last I have met you. My name is Time. I have been in search of you these three ages. I have worn out all these wings to find you out." At these words he stifled the King. Zephyrus carried his dead body back to the Palace of Felicity. "Since that fatal day nobody has got sight of the Princess" (pp. 176-196).

7. GIBBON AT WESTMINSTER SCHOOL (p. 39).

Gibbon was not clear as to the earlier dates in his life. The death of his mother he placed both in 1746 and 1747 (*Auto.*, pp. 45, 221, 295). His grandfather Porten's bankruptcy he placed in the spring of 1747 and 1748 (*ib.*, pp. 48, 119, 223). In one account it was in February, 1751, that he became Francis's pupil, and in another account in January, 1752 (*ib.*, pp. 55, 116). Of his time at Westminster School he gives three different accounts. According to the text he entered in January, 1749; the date of his departure

he does not give. In a second memoir he says he passed "two years and a half at the school—from January, 1748, to August, 1750" (*Auto.*, p. 115). In a third account he says: "I continued near two years (from Christmas, 1748, to August, 1750)" (*ib.*, p. 221). He consulted Dr. Vincent, headmaster, in 1793, who replied: "From Dr. Nichol's book, which is in my possession, you were entered in January, 1748. It was the same year I was entered myself in the September following. Your age is noticed, as is that of all the others in Dr. N.'s book, which makes you nine years old in 1748. . . . Dr. Vincent is sure of his own memory when he asserts that he remembers Mr. Gibbon at Mrs. Porten's house in 1748, as he lived next door" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 489). In January, 1748, Gibbon was ten.

Mr. J. Sargeaunt, the author of *Annals of Westminster School*, informs me that "Vincent was a very accurate man".

If the earlier dates are correct, it was not the twelfth but the eleventh year of Gibbon's age that was "the most propitious to the growth of his intellectual stature"; and it was not the loss of three but of four "precious years" that he had to lament (*ante*, p. 43).

The headmaster's name Gibbon gives correctly in the text—John Nicoll; though elsewhere he writes it Nichols (*Auto.*, pp. 116, 221), as did Cowper and Cumberland. Cowper, who at the age of eighteen left the school not long after Gibbon entered, says of Nicoll's preparation of the boys for confirmation: "The old man acquitted himself of this duty like one who had a deep sense of its importance, and I believe most of us were struck by his manner, and affected by his exhortations" (Southey's *Cowper*, i., 13).

According to Cumberland, the dramatist (*Memoirs*, i., 71-2), who left Westminster about three years earlier than Cowper, Nicoll "had the art of making his scholars gentlemen". Cumberland tells how he and some of his schoolfellows one day, escaping from the Abbey service, went and disturbed a meeting of Quakers. They were reported by a monitor. "When my turn came to be called up to the Master, I presume he saw my contrition, when, turning a mild look upon me, he said aloud, 'Erubuit, salva est res'*; and sent me back to my seat".

Bentham, who entered Westminster about five years after Gibbon, says that a scheme was formed for erecting houses in Dean's Yard for people who wished to send their sons to the school. No tenant was found "except one woman, who was an aunt of Gibbon. The scheme failed; and when half a dozen houses were built no new funds were forthcoming, and they were either pulled down, or were left to decay" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 29). "The discipline of these houses was supposed to be under the control of one of the masters, who received a fee from the dame. It was sometimes little more than a name. Of the masters some at least were content to act only when the boys interfered with their personal comfort. Perhaps few were like Dodd, the actor's son, who allowed his father to come drunk from Drury Lane and play his part again to an audience of striplings and infants" (Sargeaunt's *Annals*, etc., p. 159).

Under Dr. Nicoll's successor the school seems to have suffered. According to Bentham "it was a wretched place for instruction. . . . He often spoke of the tyranny and cruelty of the fagging system. 'It was,' he said, 'a horrid despotism. . . . Our great glory was Dr. Markham [the headmaster, afterwards Archbishop of York]. He had a large quantity of classical knowledge. His business was rather in courting the great than in attending to the school. Any excuse served his purpose for deserting his post'" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 30, 34).

In 1779 six of the boys were tried at the Quarter Sessions for wounding a man in Dean's Yard. One of them, with a drawn knife in his hand, said, "If you don't kneel down and ask pardon, I will rip you up," which the man was

* "He blushes; all is well" (Terence, *Adelphi*, iv., 5. 9).

compelled to do to save his life. Four of them were sentenced to a month's imprisonment and £100 fine to be paid among them; but if they would in court ask the prosecutor's pardon on their knees, as they had compelled him to ask theirs, the court would take off the imprisonment. They absolutely refused asking pardon on their knees. The sentence stood thus for about an hour, when the father of one of the four told the court that his son was elected to Christ College, Oxford, and must go there in a few days or lose his election. On this the court took off his imprisonment. This being done some of the magistrates moved that the rest might have their imprisonment taken off also. On a division it was carried by nine to seven. They were then directed to make the prosecutor satisfaction. Their friends paid him £50, and his attorney £20 for the costs (*Annual Register*, 1779, i., 213).

Southey, who entered Westminster in 1788, speaking of the advantages which a day-scholar in every school has over a boarder, says: "He suffers nothing from tyranny, which is carried to excess in schools. . . . Above all, his religious habits, which it is almost impossible to retain at school, are safe. I would gladly send a son to a good school by day; but rather than board him at the best, I would, at whatever inconvenience, educate him myself" (Southey's *Life and Corres.*, i., 80).

8. AUTHORS READ BY GIBBON IN HIS BOYHOOD (p. 44).

(*a*) Thomas Hearne.

Ductor Historicus; or a Short System of Universal History, &c. By Thomas Hearne. Oxford, 1704. 8vo. 2 vols.

Gibbon, in his *Address on our Latin Memorials of the Middle Ages* (*Misc. Works*, iii., 566), says: "The last who has dug deep into the mine was Thomas Hearne, a clerk of Oxford, poor in fortune, and, indeed, poor in understanding. His minute and obscure diligence, his voracious and undistinguishing appetite, and the coarse vulgarity of his taste and style, have exposed him to the ridicule of idle wits. Yet it cannot be denied that Thomas Hearne has gathered many gleanings of the harvest; but if his own prefaces are filled with crude and extraneous matter, his editions will be always recommended by their accuracy and use."

Pope addresses him in *The Dunciad* (iii., 189):—

> "To future ages may thy dulness last,
> As thou preserv'st the dulness of the past."

Gray's friend, Richard West, wrote *The Reply of Time to Tom Hearne*:—

> "Ho! ho! cried Time to Thomas Hearne,
> Whatever I forget, you learn."

(Walpole's *Letters*, i., 1.)

(*b*) Littlebury's "Herodotus".

The Ægyptian and Grecian History of Herodotus. Translated from the Greek by Isaac Littlebury. 2 vols. 8vo. 1709.—In spite of its *lameness* it reached a third edition in 1737 (*Gent. Mag.*, 1737, p. 578).

(*c*) Spelman's "Xenophon".

The Expedition of Cyrus into Persia. Translated, with notes, by Edward Spelman, Esq. London, 1742. 2 vols. 8vo.—Gibbon described it as "one of the most accurate and elegant prose translations that any language has produced" (*Misc. Works*, v., 587).

(*d*) Gordon's "Tacitus".

The Works of Tacitus. By Thomas Gordon. London, 1728-31. Folio. 2 vols.—The second edition, in 4 vols. 8vo, is advertised in *The Gent. Mag.*, 1737, p. 320. Mr. Arthur Galton reprinted in 1890 portions of Gordon's translation, to which he prefixed an interesting introduction (London: Walter Scott).

(*e*) Procopius.

The History of the Warres of the Emperor Justinian. Written in Greek by Procopius, and Englished by H. Holcroft, Knight. London, 1653.—For Gibbon's estimate of Procopius see *The Decline*, iv., 210. Macaulay, in the opening of his *History of England*, after recounting a ghostly story of one province of our island, continues: "Such were the marvels which an able historian [Procopius] . . . gravely related in the rich and polite Constantinople, touching the country in which the founder of Constantinople had assumed the imperial purple".

(*f*) John Speed.

Speed published in 1611 *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* and *The History of Great Britaine under the Conquests of ye Romans, Saxons, Danes and Normans.*

(*g*) Rapin.

Voltaire, speaking of works of great merit, wrote in 1752: "La nation française est de toutes les nations celle qui a produit le plus de ces ouvrages. Sa langue est devenue la langue de l'Europe: tout y a contribué . . . les pasteurs calvinistes réfugiés, qui ont porté l'éloquence, la méthode dans les pays étrangers; . . . un Rapin de Thoyras, qui a donné en français la seule bonne histoire d'Angleterre" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xviii., 265).

In *The Gent. Mag.*, 1731, p. 90, is advertised: "*The History of England*, &c., by M. De Rapin Thoyras [*sic*]. Done into English by N. Tindal, M.A. Vol. XIV."—There were fifteen volumes in all. Tindal dedicated it to the Prince of Wales, "who was so pleased that he gave him a gold medal worth forty guineas" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1733, p. 357).

(*h*) Mézeray.

Mézeray's *Histoire de France* was translated by John Bulteel in 1683.

To Mézeray Sainte-Beuve gives two of his *Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 194-233.

Prior wrote some lines in a copy of the History, beginning:—

"Whate'er thy countrymen have done
By law and wit, by sword and gun,
In thee is faithfully recited."

(Prior's *Poetical Works*, ed. 1858, p. 102.) See Lockhart's *Scott*, ed. 1839, x., 81, for Scott's recitation of them.

(*i*) Davila.

Davila's *Historia delle Guerre civili di Francia* was translated by Cotterell and Aylesbury in 1647-48.—"Davila, it is said, was one of John Hampden's favourite writers" (Macaulay's *Essays*, ed. 1874, i., 442).

(*j*) Machiavel.

The translation of Machiavel began as early as 1562 (Lowndes's *Bibl. Man.*, p. 1438).

(*k*) Fra Paolo Sarpi.

Gibbon, writing of Fra Paolo Sarpi, says: "Whoever will give himself the trouble, or rather the pleasure, of perusing that incomparable historian," &c. (*Misc. Works*, iv., 551). Johnson began to translate his *History of the Council of Trent* (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 135). "He is my favourite modern historian," wrote Macaulay (*Life*, ed. 1877, ii., 285).

(*l*) Archibald Bower.

Bower's *History of the Popes* was published in 1748-66. 4to. 7 vols. Price, £4 4s.—Gibbon wrote of him in 1764: "He is a rogue unmasked, who enjoyed for twenty years the favour of the public, because he had quitted a sect [the Jesuits] to which he still secretly adhered, and because he had been a counsellor of the inquisition in the town of Macerata, where an inquisition never existed" (*Misc. Works*, v., 464). He was one of the writers of the *Universal History* (Johnson's *Letters*, ii., 433). Goldsmith introduces him in *Retaliation* among the "quacking divines". See also Horace Walpole's *Letters*, ii., 209, 508.

(*m*) Lawrence Eachard.

Of Eachard's *Roman History*, 5 vols., 8vo, London, 1707, "Vols. 1, 2 only are professedly written by Eachard; the subsequent vols. purport to be continuations by another hand" (*Brit. Mus. Cat.*). The continuation was carried down to the taking of Constantinople by the Turks. "He stole his *Roman History* from Dr. Howell's History, without so much as making acknowledgment" (Hearne's *Collections*, i., 297).

(*n*) William Howell.

Howell's *History of the World* was published in 1680-85.

(*o*) Rev. Simon Ockley.

Hearne wrote of Ockley in 1706: "Being naturally inclin'd to ye study of ye Oriental Tongues, he was, when abt 17 years of Age, made Hebrew Lecturer in ye said College [Queen's College, Cambridge], chiefly because he was poor, and could hardly subsist. In ye Arabick Language he is said by some Judges to be ye best skill'd of any Man in England" (Hearne's *Collections*, i., 245).

Gibbon, mentioning his *History of the Saracens*, continues: "Besides our printed authors, he draws his materials from the Arabic MSS. of Oxford, which he would have more deeply searched, had he been confined to the Bodleian Library instead of the City Jail; a fate how unworthy of the man and of his country" (*The Decline*, vi., 4). He died in 1720.

(*p*) Abulpharagius.

"Consult, peruse, and study the *Specimen Historiæ Arabum* of Pocock! (Oxon., 1650, in 4to.) The thirty pages of text and version are extracted from the *Dynasties* of Gregory Abulpharagius, which Pocock afterwards translated" (*The Decline*, v., 314). See also *ib.*, v., 155, for Gibbon's praise of Abulpharagius as "a poet, physician and historian, a subtle philosopher and a moderate divine".

(*q*) Cellarius.

Notitia Orbis Antiqui, sive Geographia Plenior. By Christopher Cellarius. 1703-6. 2 vols.—Gibbon, after reading Emmius's *Geographical Description of Greece*, wrote: "It contributed a good deal to confirm me in the contemptible idea I always entertained of Cellarius" (*Misc. Works*, v., 286).

(*r*) Dr. Edward Wells.

An Historical Geography of the Old and New Testament. By Edward Wells, D.D. 1708-11.

(*s*) Strauchius.

Strauchius (Ægidius Strauch) published in 1697 *Dissertatio historico-chronologica de epocha mundi conditi.*

(*t*) Helvicus.

Christophorus Helvicus published in 1609 *Theatrum Historicum, sive Chronologiæ systema novum,* &c.

(*u*) James Anderson.

James Anderson's *Royal Genealogies ; or the Genealogical Tables of Emperors, Kings and Princes from Adam to these Times* was published in 1732.

(*v*) Archbishop Usher.

Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti, 1650-54. Usher published also an English version. "Usher," said Johnson, "was the great luminary of the Irish Church ; and a greater, he added, no Church could boast of ; at least in modern times" (Boswell's *Johnson,* ii., 132).

(*w*) Dr. Humphrey Prideaux.

The Old and New Testament Connected, &c. By Humphrey Prideaux, D.D. London, 1716-18. Fol. 2 vols.—Hearne wrote of him that Dean Aldrich "used to speak slightingly of him, as an unaccurate muddy-headed man" (Hearne's *Remains,* iii., 157). See *ante,* p. 223.

(*x*) J. J. Scaliger.

J. J. Scaliger published his *De Emendatione Temporum* in 1583, and his *Thesaurus Temporum* in 1606.

(*y*) Petavius.

"Denis Pétau, né à Orléans, en 1583, jésuite. Il a réformé la chronologie" (*Œuvres de Voltaire,* xvii., 141). "Il se trouve, selon le frère Pétau, jésuite, que la famille de Noé avait produit un bi-milliard deux cent quarante-sept milliards deux cent vingt-quatre millions sept cent dix-sept habitants en trois cent ans. Le bon prêtre Petau ne savait pas ce que c'est que de faire des enfans et de les élever. Comme il y va !" (*Ib.,* xvi., 400.)

9. GIBBON AT MAGDALEN COLLEGE (p. 49).

Gibbon, as the College Books show, was the only Gentleman-Commoner who entered in 1752. In 1750, four entered; in 1751, one, and in 1752, before he left, two. In the next two years and a half sixteen entered. The late Rev. J. R. Bloxam, D.D., formerly Fellow of the College, who graduated in 1832, wrote to me on Jan. 29, 1889: "There was no tradition in my time of the set of rooms which Gibbon occupied. President Routh told Milman that story of Finden, the Fellow which he gives in a note [*ante,* p. 61, *n.*], but he also told him that Gibbon had a great head, always wore black, and came late into Hall. He was admitted as a member of the College on April 2, 1752, and matriculated in the Easter Vacation. His name disappears from the Buttery Book on July 4, 1753 ; but his name was not taken

off the College Books regularly till 1755, when he received back his caution money (£40). Before that time he had joined the Church of Rome, and had left it, of which proceeding the College was probably entirely ignorant. After he had published his Autobiography [this is a mistake, as it was published after his death], one of the Magdalen Fellows met him in Oxford, and asked him to dine at Magdalen, saying, 'If you come, we will not burn you'. He replied that he would have done so, but that he had an engagement in London at a certain time, and must proceed on his journey thither. There is a book in the Eton College Library, Bishop Hall's *Satires*, with his name written in it in a boyish hand, 'Edward Gibbon, Gentleman Commoner of Magdalen College, Oxford, May 10, 1753'. When, as Librarian of Magdalen College, I read his taunt that the College had no writers, I commenced a Library of Magdalen authors, and, in addition to many works of authors like Addison, collected about three hundred volumes, for which collection I have still some to be added. His second tutor, whose name he suppresses, was Dr. Thomas Winchester, of whom I have given an account in my *Register of Demies*, whom old President Routh recollected."

Dr. Routh was elected President of Magdalen in 1791. He died in December, 1854, aged ninety-nine. Gibbon passed a night in Oxford in Oct., 1793 (*ante*, p. 251, *n.* 1).

"One unparalleled beauty belonging to this College is the extensive outlet. The Grove seems perfectly adapted to indulge contemplation; being a pleasant kind of solitude, laid out in walks, and well planted with elms. It has likewise a bowling-green in it, and having some beautiful lawns, feeds about forty head of deer. Beside these walks, there is a very delightful one round a meadow, surrounded by the branches of the Cherwell; whence it is called the Water-Walk" (*A Pocket Companion for Oxford*, ed. 1762, p. 31).

Addison, it seems, had not yet given his name to the long straight walk on the northern side.

It was as a Gentleman-Commoner that Gibbon received the key of the library. James wrote from Queen's College in his fourth year: "The honour of the key of the library was in consequence of my application to the Doctor. It has, however, many inconveniences; whenever I want to go in, I am forced to get the *butler's* keys, there being two locks on the door to prevent a subscriber's entering without leave" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, p. 165).

The dreariness of a poor student's lot at Oxford is described in *An Epistle from Oxon to a Friend*, published in the same volume as Johnson's Latin version of Pope's *Messiah* (Husband's *Miscellany of Poems*, 1731, p. 121). Husband was a Fellow of Pembroke College. The poet writes:—

"But I, unhappy I, whom cloistered walls
Incage, far distant from my native soil,
The sport of wanton fortune, live deprived
Of every common privilege of life.
Nor converse me of entertaining friend,
Nor merry tale, nor care-beguiling jest,
Nor social catch, nor quavering laugh delight.
My gloomy, melancholy, mournful days
Pass joyless, doomed for ever to the din
Of wrangling, barbarous, unmeaning terms,
The pedant's learned jargon, and the plague
Of dull, illogical, untutored youth.
. . . . . .
Thirst in my throat, and famine in my bowels,
I to recess of naked room repair;
A garret vile, dark, dark and dismal all
As night. . . . .
No warmth of wood
My frozen limbs with crackling blaze revives."

10. WARBURTON AND LOWTH (p. 49).

Warburton, in an *Appendix Concerning the Book of Job*, published in the fourth edition of *The Divine Legation*, vol. v., p. 409, attacking Lowth for maintaining that "idolatry was punished under the œconomy of the Patriarchs, in the families and under the dominion of Abraham, Melchisedec, and Job," continues (p. 414): "But the learned *Professor*, who has been hardily brought up in the keen atmosphere of WHOLESOME SEVERITIES, and early taught to distinguish between *de facto* and *de jure*, thought it needless to enquire into *Facts*, when he was secure of the *Right*. And therefore only slightly and superciliously asks, 'What? was not Abraham, by his very *princely office* to *punish Idolatry?* Were not Melchisedec and Job, and all the heads of Tribes to do the same?' Why, no; and it is well for Religion that they were not. It is for its honour that such a set of persecuting Patriarchs is nowhere to be found but in a *poetical Prelection*."

"To understand," writes Pattison, "the bitterness of this taunt, we must recur to Lowth's peculiar position before the world in 1765. The University of Oxford was committed by all the traditions of seventy years to the principles of High Church and Jacobitism. Convicted of scarcely disguised disaffection to the reigning dynasty, it had been treated by successive ministries with neglect and contempt. Lowth stood forward as the foremost man and representative of this disgraced and semi-outlaw society. To fasten upon him the stigma of being the champion of disloyalty and persecuting principles, the presumed atmosphere in which Lowth had been brought up, would have been a fatal bar to his prospects in the Church. Nothing, therefore, could be more malignant than Warburton's hints, while at the same time nothing could be more unjust; for though the public and the Government were not yet aware of it, a great change had been working in the opinions and feelings of the University. The old High Church and High Tory party, of which Dr. King was the representative, had been slowly losing in numbers and influence, and a new generation forming in a mould less alien from the general feeling and opinion of England. To this party, which comprehended the younger and better minds in the University, the doctrines of the old Tory, his Stuart attachments, and his passion for 'wholesome severities' against Nonconformists, were already distasteful; and it was of this party that Lowth was the representative. Stung at once by the unfairness of the taunt, and by its damning nature, Lowth threw all his force into his reply to it. He distinctly and emphatically repudiates, as he could with truth, the insinuation of intolerance and persecuting tenets. 'I have never omitted any opportunity that fairly offered itself of bearing my testimony against those very principles, and of expressing my abhorrence of them both in public and in private.' And then he turns upon the bishop: 'Pray, my lord, what is it to the purpose where I have been brought up? . . . Had I not your lordship's example to justify me, I should think it a piece of extreme impertinence to inquire where *you* were bred. It is commonly said your lordship's education was of that particular kind concerning which it is a remark of that great judge of men and manners, Lord Clarendon, that it particularly disposes them to be proud, insolent, and pragmatical. "Colonel Harrison was the son of a butcher, and had been bred up in the place of a clerk, under a lawyer of good account in those parts; which kind of education introduces men into the language and practice of business; and if it be not resisted by the great ingenuity of the person, inclines young men to more pride than any other kind of breeding, and disposes them to be pragmatical and insolent." [*History of the Rebellion*, ed. 1826, vi., 219.] Now, my lord, as you have in your whole behaviour, and in all your writings, remarkably distinguished yourself by your humility, lenity, meekness, forbearance, candour, humanity, civility, decency, good manners, good temper, moderation with regard to the opinions of others, and a modest diffidence of your

own, this unpromising circumstance of your education is so far from being a disgrace to you, that it highly redounds to your praise. For myself, on the contrary, it is well if I can acquit myself of the burden of being responsible for the great advantages which I enjoyed. For, my lord, I was educated in the University of Oxford,' &c. [*Letter to Bishop Warburton*, &c., ed. 1766, p. 64]" (Pattison's *Works*, ed. 1889, ii., 140).

11. HOOKER, CHILLINGWORTH, AND LOCKE (p. 50).

"I have often heard Mr. Locke say, in reference to his first years spent in the University," said his friend Lady Masham, "that he had so small satisfaction there from his studies, as finding very little light brought thereby to his understanding, that he became discontented with his manner of life, and wished his father had rather designed him for anything else than what he was destined to, apprehending that his no greater progress in knowledge proceeded from his not being fitted or capacitated to be a scholar" (Fox Bourne's *Life of Locke*, ed. 1876, i., 47).

"The scholastic teaching of Oxford had a large share in forming, by reaction, many of his most characteristic opinions. . . . We can hardly doubt that, if Locke had been brought up in a university where logic and philosophy did not form part of the course, his greatest work would never have been written" (T. Fowler's *Locke*, ed. 1880, p. 6).

At Christ Church he long enjoyed a studentship, corresponding to a fellowship at other colleges. In 1684 he was illegally deprived of it by the servile Dean, Bishop Fell, and the Chapter (King's *Life of Locke*, ed. 1858, pp. 147, 149, 175). King William neglected to restore him.

By joining Hooker and Chillingworth with Locke, Gibbon seems to imply that they also were ill-used by the University. Hooker's obligations to Oxford are acknowledged by his biographer, who, speaking of his election to a scholarship at Corpus, says: "And now as he was much encouraged, so now he was perfectly incorporated into this beloved college, which was then noted for an eminent library, strict students, and remarkable scholars". His Fellowship, which he gained four years later, he lost by his unhappy marriage. "By this marriage the good man was drawn from the tranquillity of his college; from that garden of piety, of pleasure, of peace, and a sweet conversation, into the thorny wilderness of a busy world" (Walton's *Lives*, ed. 1838, pp. 175, 185).

Chillingworth was first Scholar and next Fellow of Trinity College. Oxford does not seem to have been wanting to him.

12. FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES (p. 53).

Adam Smith attacked the Universities of Europe. In France, he says, they suffered from "an arbitrary and extraneous jurisdiction". A professor could gain protection from it, "not by ability or diligence in his profession, but by obsequiousness to the will of his superiors". "It is observed by Mr. de Voltaire, that Father Porrée, a Jesuit of no great eminence in the republic of letters, was the only professor they ever had in France whose works were worth the reading. ['Porée (*Charles*) . . . du petit nombre de professeurs qui ont eu de la célébrité chez les gens du monde' (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xvii., 142).] . . . The observation of Mr. de Voltaire may be applied, I believe, not only to France, but to all other Roman Catholic countries. We very rarely find in any of them an eminent man of letters who is a professor in an university, except, perhaps, in the professions of law and physic."

Smith says of "the philosophical education" generally given: "The alterations which the universities of Europe thus introduced into the ancient course of philosophy were all meant for the education of ecclesiastics. . . . But the additional quantity of subtlety and sophistry, the casuistry and the ascetic morality which those alterations introduced into it, certainly did not render it more for the education of gentlemen, or men of the world, or more likely either to improve the understanding or to mend the heart. This course of philosophy is what still continues to be taught in the greater part of the universities of Europe" (*Wealth of Nations*, ed. 1811, iii., 169, 182, 239).

Gibbon, in *The Decline*, vi., 189, describing how at Salerno "a school, the first that arose in the darkness of Europe, was consecrated to the healing art," continues: "The school of medicine has long slept in the name of an university".

Five years after Gibbon left Oxford, Blackstone said in his opening lecture on the study of the law: "A fashion has prevailed, especially of late, to transport the growing hopes of this island to foreign universities, in Switzerland, Germany and Holland; which, though infinitely inferior to our own in every other consideration, have been looked upon as better nurseries of the civil, or (which is nearly the same) of their own municipal law" (Blackstone's *Commentaries*, ed. 1775, i., 5).

13. COLLEGE COMMON ROOMS AND MAGDALEN FELLOWS (p. 57).

Robert Lloyd, the schoolfellow of Churchill, Cowper, and Warren Hastings, and also of Gibbon, though his senior by four years, thus ridicules the Fellows of Oxford in *The North Briton* for 30th October, 1762:—

> "Fellows! who've soak'd away their knowledge
> In sleepy residence at College;
> Whose lives are like a stagnant pool,
> Muddy and placid, dull and cool;
> Mere drinking, eating; eating, drinking;
> With no impertinence of thinking."

Thomas Warton, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, in *The Progress of Discontent* (1746) describes the feelings of a man who had resigned his fellowship for a College living:—

> "Why did I sell my College life
> (He cries) for benefice and wife?
> Return, ye days, when endless pleasure
> I found in reading or in leisure;
> When calm around the Common Room
> I puff'd my daily pipe's perfume;
> Rode for a stomach, and inspected,
> At annual bottlings, corks selected;
> And din'd untax'd, untroubl'd, under
> The portrait of our pious Founder."
>
> (Warton's *Poetical Works*, ed. 1802, ii., 197.)

In many of the Colleges the Common Room was open to the commoners as well as to the gentlemen-commoners. In 1776 Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, writes Boswell, "told us that in some of the Colleges, the fellows had excluded the students from social intercourse with them in the common room. JOHNSON. 'They are in the right, Sir: there can be no real conversation, no fair exertion of mind amongst them, if the young men are by; for a man who has a character does not choose to stake it in their presence'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 443).

Among "the monks of Magdalen" was George Horne, afterwards Bishop of Norwich. He was a man of exemplary character, who at this time was engaged on his *Commentary on the Psalms*. That only fifteen years later he was elected President seems to show that the majority of the junior Fellows of Gibbon's time were not so degraded as he paints them. G. V. Cox, writing of Oxford in 1794, says that "Dr. Horne's name was familiar to me in such phrases as, 'True as George Horne,' 'Sweet-tempered as George Horne'" (*Recollections of Oxford*, ed. 1868, p. 153). "Parr said of him, 'he understood Greek and he loved Hebrew,' meaning, as is interpreted, that he did not understand Hebrew" (H. D. Best's *Memorials*, p. 62).

Dr. Waldgrave, Gibbon's first tutor, sent to the College from his country living two manuscript volumes of annotations on Plato, with the inscription: "Dr. Waldgrave to Dr. Horne and the College. All Health. January 1, 1776. The *oblivia vitæ* after the death of a Friend, And that Friend, A Wife." At the end he recorded: "The Dialogues are the most illiterate, most inelegant and most insipid repast the mind of man can sit down to. To the Epistles I allow some merit in point of diction." In his epitaph in Washington Church, perhaps composed by himself, it is said that "he came mourning into the world three months after the death of his Father, took gently there what gently came, and left it April 26, 1784, thanking God for the past and hoping humbly through the great Redemption for his future mercies".

Another of the monks was Thomas West, D.D., who was once bursar of the College. "It was suggested to him that he ought to get some cattle to eat down the grass of the meadow. He sent for a farmer who, agreeing to put in some stock, asked what he was to pay per head per week. 'Pay?' said the bursar. 'Do you think Magdalen College is to be under an obligation to such an one as you?'" (*Ib.*, p. 295.) See *ib.* for his one vain attempt to visit London.

H. D. Best, himself a Fellow of Magdalen, wrote of another Fellow: "Here he lived for five and thirty years; 'he had nothing to do and he did it,' to quote a witticism of George Horne" (*ib.*, p. 136). See also *Letters of Radcliffe and James*, pp. 85, 191.

The Rev. H. A. Wilson, in his *Magdalen College*, pp. 222, 244, 249, says that the greater part of the demies were graduates biding their time for a fellowship to fall vacant, to which they would succeed as a matter of course. "Their studies were without the stimulus of rivalry or the interest of companionship." The position of gentleman-commoner lasted for a hundred years after Gibbon left the College. There was a reforming party among the Fellows who wished to abolish them, but they could not overcome the opposition of the aged President, Dr. Routh. "Their virtual abolition took place in 1854."

14. DECLAMATIONS IN HALL (p. 59).

By the statutes of Pembroke College "all non-graduate scholars and commoners are to declaim publicly in hall on Saturdays after common prayers". Under the Commonwealth "this rule was abrogated from April 18, 1651, in order that all might prepare themselves for the Lord's Day" (Macleane's *Pembroke College*, pp. 189, 231). It was restored later on, for Johnson declaimed (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 71, n. 2). James wrote from Queen's College in 1778: "Sanderson [the author of *Logicae Artis Compendium*] is the great oracle next to Aristotle, to whose bust the wranglers in the hall seem to pay a more profound reverence than to common sense" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, p. 50). The Provost of the College says in a note on this passage that "it probably refers to the disputations performed as exercises by the students". In Magdalen College the declamations were

restored by Routh, who became President in 1791. James Hurdis, a demy of 1782, describing the College at the end of the eighteenth century, says: "All young men of three years' standing, whether gentlemen-commoners or dependent members, are still called upon in their turns to declaim before the whole College, immediately after dinner, while the society and their visitants are yet sitting at their respective tables. Neither is the gentleman-commoner exempted from any other exercise which the College requires of its dependent members" (*A Word or Two in Vindication of the University of Oxford and of Magdalen College in particular from the Posthumous Aspersions of Mr. Gibbon*, p. 13).

Francis Newbery, who entered Trinity College in 1762, describes how the under-graduates in turn, one every day, "recited thirty or forty lines from one of the classics during the clatter of knives and forks and plates in the middle of dinner, the speaker standing in the middle of the hall" (*A Bookseller of the Last Century*, by C. Welsh, ed. 1885, p. 128).

15. DISCIPLINE AT OXFORD (p. 66).

William Scott (afterwards the great Admiralty Judge, Lord Stowell) entered Oxford in 1761 at the age of fifteen. Five years later he wrote to his father about a younger brother: "Send Jack up to me, I can do better for him here". Jack was the future Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Eldon (Twiss's *Life of Eldon*, ed. 1846, i., 38). William Scott would never have had him sent up to a life of idleness.

R. L. Edgeworth, in 1761, entered Corpus Christi College as a gentleman-commoner. "I applied assiduously," he wrote, "not only to my studies under my excellent tutor, but also to the perusal of the best English writers. . . . I remember with satisfaction the pleasure I then felt from the consciousness of intellectual improvement." He speaks highly of his fellow-students (*Memoirs of R. L. Edgeworth*, ed. 1844, p. 55).

The first Earl of Malmesbury, who entered Merton College in 1763, and resided two years, gives the same account as Gibbon: "The discipline of the University was so lax that a gentleman-commoner was under no restraint, and never called upon to attend either lectures, or chapel, or hall. My tutor, an excellent and worthy man, according to the practice of all tutors at that moment, gave himself no concern about his pupils. I never saw him but during a fortnight; when I took it into my head to be taught trigonometry" (*Diaries of the First Earl of Malmesbury*, Preface, p. 11).

Bentham, who was at Queen's College at the same time, said: "I learnt nothing. I took to reading Greek of my own fancy; but there was no encouragement. We just went to the foolish lectures of our Tutors to be taught something of logical jargon" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 41).

Charles James Fox, who entered Hertford College at Michaelmas, 1764, at the age of fifteen, wrote: "I like Oxford well enough; I read there a great deal, and am very fond of mathematics. . . . I really think to a man who reads a great deal there cannot be a more agreeable place." His father spoke of his son "studying very hard at Oxford" (Earl Russell's *Life of Fox*, ed. 1859, i., 6).

Sir William Jones, entering University College in 1764, was at first as much disappointed as Gibbon; but "this disgust soon subsided. He found in the University all the means and opportunity of study which he could wish. He perused all the Greek poets and historians of note, and the entire works of Plato and Lucian. He studied Persian, Hebrew, and German. He read the best authors in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. In his twenty-first year he began his *De Poesi Asiatica*. Seven years after he entered Oxford he sent a friend 'a little Philippic which I wrote against an obscure coxcomb who had the audacity to abuse our University'. When he took his

Master's Degree he composed an oration 'to display,' among other topics, 'the transcendant advantages of the University of Oxford'. He said that 'with the fortune of a peasant he gave himself the education of a prince'. He had been supported at Oxford, first by a scholarship and next by a fellowship" (Teignmouth's *Life of Sir W. Jones*, pp. 39-42, 44, 47, 126, 139).

John James entered Queen's College in 1778. His father, who had been at the College thirty years earlier, on hearing from his son of "the modes of education there," wrote to a friend: "From the *genius* of the place, . . . the opportunities of libraries, &c., much may be expected from a lad of spirit —but from tutors, I verily believe, *nothing*". Two years later he wrote: "Do, my dear Sir, expose to the public the vile impositions practised upon them by these people under the liberal pretence of educating youth" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, pp. 53, 133).

Southey, who entered Balliol College in 1792, wrote of his College in 1819: "It has fairly obtained a new character, and is no longer the seat of drunkenness, raffery, and indiscipline, as it was in our days" (Southey's *Life and Corres.*, iv., 342).

Sir James Stephen, who left Cambridge in 1812, wrote in 1851: "If I had the pen of Edward Gibbon, I could draw from my own experience a picture which would form no unmeet companion for that which he has bequeathed to us of his education at Oxford. The three or four years during which I lived on the banks of the Cam were passed in a very pleasant, though not a very cheap, hotel. But if they had been passed at the Clarendon in Bond Street, I do not think that the exchange would have deprived me of any aids for intellectual discipline, or for acquiring literary or scientific knowledge" (*Lectures on the History of France*, ed. 1851, i., Preface, p. 7).

16. SUBSCRIPTION TO THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES (p. 67).

"The forms of orthodoxy, the articles of faith, are subscribed with a sigh or a smile by the modern clergy" (*The Decline*, vi., 128).

Jeremy Bentham, when called upon to subscribe to the Articles, was perplexed by doubts. "Communicating my distress to some of my fellow-collegiates I found them sharers in it. Upon inquiry it was found that among the Fellows of the College there was one to whose office it belonged, among other things, to remove all scruples. We repaired to him with fear and trembling. His answer was cold; and the substance of it was—that it was not for uninformed youths, such as we, to presume to set up our private judgments against a public one, formed by some of the holiest, as well as best and wisest men, that ever lived. I signed; but by the view I found myself forced to take of the whole business such an impression was made as will never depart from me but with life" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 37).

On Feb. 6, 1772, a petition was presented to Parliament for the relief of clergymen and students at the Universities from subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles. By a majority of 217 to 71 leave to bring up the petition was refused. Fox, "who", to quote Gibbon, "had prepared himself for that holy war by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard," losing £11,000, supported the majority, and so did Burke (*Misc. Works*, ii., 74; *Parl. Hist.*, xvii., 245-296; Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 150).

Lord Westbury, in a debate in the House of Lords, in 1863, on the proposal to abolish subscriptions to formularies of faith as a qualification for degrees at Oxford, said: "My attention was singularly fixed upon this matter many years ago, when I matriculated at the University at the early age of fourteen. I was told by the Vice-Chancellor, 'You are too young to take the common oath of obedience to the Statutes of the University, but are quite old enough to subscribe the Articles of Religion'" (*Life of Lord Westbury*, by T. A. Nash, ed. 1888, i., 14).

It was not till Michaelmas term, 1854, that by Act of Parliament subscription was no longer required for matriculation and the Bachelor's degree. In 1871, by a second Act, the higher degrees were also made free. My old friend and fellow-student, the late Professor John Nichol, of Glasgow University, who would not subscribe the Articles, was thereby debarred from all chance of a fellowship, which should have been the reward of his high attainments (See *Memoirs of John Nichol*, p. 141). I, too, was debarred for many years from advancing beyond the Bachelor's degree.

Dr. Edward Bentham, Regius Professor of Divinity, replying to Burke's "illiberal aspersions of the University of Oxford" in his speech on Nov. 2, 1773 (*Parl. Hist.*, xviii., 854), had the impudence to write: "Here Philosophy and Theology reciprocally join their assisting powers together, to point out to our ingenuous youth the characteristics that constitute the difference between justice and dishonesty, truth and falsehood, liberty and licentiousness. . . . Here we peruse with sedulous attention the ancient pages of the Grecian and Roman sages. . . . But lest our attention should be so engrossed by a constant application to ancient History as to neglect those transactions that are nearer to our times, King George I. has encouraged the study of modern History with a munificence which does honour to Royalty. No wonder then that our excellent mode of education should be viewed with admiration by foreigners, and extort the eulogiums even of the most prejudiced" (*The Honour of the University of Oxford Defended*, &c., London, n.d., p. 5).

17. LAWS AGAINST POPERY (p. 73).

Blackstone, after giving a summary of the laws against Popery, continues: "Of which the President Montesquieu observes that they are so rigorous, though not professedly of the sanguinary kind, that they do all the hurt that can possibly be done in cold blood. But in answer to this it may be observed (what foreigners, who only judge from our statute-book, are not fully apprised of) that these laws are seldom exerted to their utmost extent; and, indeed, if they were, it would be very difficult to excuse them. . . . But if a time should ever arrive, and perhaps it is not very distant, when all fears of a Pretender shall have vanished, and the power and influence of the Pope shall become feeble, ridiculous, and despicable, not only in England, but in every kingdom of Europe, it probably would not then be remiss to review and soften these rigorous edicts; at least till the *civil* principles of the Roman Catholics called again upon the legislature to renew them: for it ought not to be left in the breast of every merciless bigot to drag down the vengeance of these occasional laws upon inoffensive, though mistaken, subjects; in opposition to the lenient inclinations of the civil magistrate, and to the destruction of every principle of toleration and religious liberty" (*Comment.*, p. 57).

Gibbon, in *The Decline*, &c., vi., 128, *n.*, after referring to Blackstone, continues: "The exceptions of Papists, and of those who deny the Trinity, would still leave a tolerable scope for persecution, if the national spirit were not more effectual than a hundred statutes".

"April 26, 1748. Ireland.—One George Williams was convicted at Wexford Assizes for being perverted from the Protestant to the Popish religion, and sentenced to be out of the King's protection, his lands and tenements, goods and chattels, to be forfeited to the King, and his body to remain at the King's pleasure" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1748, p. 186).

"Oct. 20, 1755.—At the Westminster Quarter Sessions a bill of indictment was found against two Popish priests, who have been lately very busy in making converts" (*ib.*, 1755, p. 473).

"Aug. 20, 1767.—At the Assizes at Croydon, John Baptist Malony was tried for unlawfully exercising the function of a Popish priest, and administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to divers persons, after the

manner of the Church of Rome, when he was found guilty, and received sentence of perpetual imprisonment" (*Gent. Mag.*, 1767, p. 428). He was set free by the Government in defiance of the law (*Parl. Hist.*, xix., 1139, 1145). See also Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 427, *n.*, and Johnson's *Letters*, i., 401, *n.*

It was stated in the House of Commons in 1791 that "in Burn's *Ecclesiastical Law*, a book in almost every gentleman's hands, no less than seventy pages were occupied with an enumeration of the penal statutes still in force against Roman Catholics" (*Parl. Hist.*, xxviii., 1262).

18. LECTURES OF SIR WILLIAM SCOTT AND SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE (p. 80).

(*a*) Sir William Scott.

William Scott was Camden Professor of Ancient History from 1774 to 1785. He was knighted in 1788 on being made King's Advocate-General. He was made Judge of the High Court of Admiralty in 1798, and was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Stowell in 1821.

John James wrote from Queen's College in 1779 that Scott's lectures "are perhaps superior to anything of the kind in point of elegance and erudition. The price of attendance was three guineas. Scott is intimate with Dr. Johnston [Johnson]. He has a good deal of the Doctor's manner. Sometimes he copies his faults. . . . Describing the houses of the Athenians he acquainted his audience 'that they had no convenience by which the volatile parts of fire could be conveyed into the open air'. How would a bricklayer stare at being told that he meant no more than that the Athenians had no chimneys! One great inconvenience attended this constant and studied elevation; for whenever he popped out a familiar word, for which it was impossible to substitute a synonyme, it came from him with as ill a grace as an oath would from a Bishop" (*Letters of Radcliffe and James*, p. 92). The lectures were never published. Dean Milman saw them in manuscript (*The Decline*, ed. Milman, 1854, i., 40). Francis Newbery (*ante*, p. 289) "attended the annual lectures by Dr. Smith in anatomy and chemistry" (*A Bookseller of the Last Century*, p. 128).

James Harris (first Earl of Malmesbury), who was at Merton College in 1764, attended "anatomical lectures, as well as those of Dr. Blackstone". The following year his mother wrote to him: "You are desired not to attend the anatomical lectures this year, as your father has no idea of bringing you up as a surgeon" (*Letters of the First Earl of Malmesbury*, ed. 1870, 1, 103, 122).

(*b*) Sir William Blackstone.

Charles Viner, who died in 1756, left £12,000 to found a Professorship of Common Law, and such fellowships and scholarships as the fund might support. Blackstone, the first professor, delivered his first lecture in October, 1758. The Commentaries were not wholly due to the benefaction. In the Preface he says: "The original plan took its rise in the year 1753; and notwithstanding the novelty of such an attempt in this age and country, and the prejudices usually conceived against any innovations in the established mode of education, he had the satisfaction to find," etc.

His successor was Sir Robert Chambers, who retained his office till 1777, three years after he had "gone as a Judge, with six thousand a year, to Bengal" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 264). He was allowed to retain it "to see whether the climate of India would suit him" (*Dict. of Nat. Biog.*). His Principalship of New Inn Hall he retained till his death in 1803. For a ludicrous story told by his Deputy-Professor, John Scott, see *Life of Lord Eldon*, ed. 1846, i., 67.

Among the Vinerian scholars are to be found the names of Sir J. T. Coleridge and Sir Walter Phillimore, Judges of the Court of Queen's Bench; Lord Chancellor Westbury, Lord Justice Chitty, and Mr. James Bryce. The present Vinerian Law Professor is Mr. A. V. Dicey.

19. GIBBON'S RECONVERSION (p. 90).

Gibbon wrote to Miss Porten in February, 1755: "I have at length good news to tell you; I am now good Protestant, and am extremely glad of it. I have in all my letters taken notice of the different movements of my mind. Entirely Catholic when I came to Lausanne, wavering long time between the two systems, and at last fixed for the Protestant; when that conflict was over, I had still another difficulty. Brought up with all the ideas of the Church of England, I could scarce resolve to Communion with Presbyterians, as all the people of this country are. I at last got over it in considering that whatever difference there may be between their churches and ours in the government and discipline, they still regard us as brethren, and profess the same faith as us. Determined, then, in my design, I declared it to the ministers of the town assembled at Mr. Pavilliard's, who, having examined me, approved of it, and permitted me to receive the Communion with them, which I did Christmas Day, from the hands of Mr. Pavilliard, who appeared extremely glad of it. I am so extremely myself, and do assure you feel a joy pure, and the more so as I know it to be not only innocent but laudable" (*Corres.*, i., 2). "This letter," writes Lord Sheffield, "is curious, as it shows in how short a time (not more than a year and a half) he had adopted the idiom of the French language, and lost that of his own" (*Misc. Works*, i., 85).

In Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 287, is given (unfortunately not in the original) an extract from the *Registre des Séances de l'Assemblée pastorale de l'Eglise de Lausanne*, relating Gibbon's conversion and admission to the Communion. Pavilliard testified that "to his great intelligence were added purity of sentiment and regularity of conduct".

20. GIBBON'S EARLY LOVE (p. 107).

Mlle. Curchod thus described him: "Il a de beaux cheveux, la main jolie, et l'air d'une personne de condition. Sa physionomie est si spirituelle et singulière, que je ne connais personne qui lui ressemble. Elle a tant d'expression, qu'on y découvre presque toujours quelque chose de nouveau. Ses gestes sont si à propos, qu'ils ajoutent beaucoup à ce qu'il dit. En un mot, c'est une de ces physionomies, si extraordinaires, qu'on ne se lasse presque point de l'examiner, de le peindre et de le contrefaire. Il connaît les égards que l'on doit aux femmes. Sa politesse est aisée sans être trop familière. Il danse médiocrement. En un mot, je lui connais peu des agréments qui font le mérite d'un petit maître. Son esprit varie prodigieusement." Here the description breaks off (*Le Salon de Madame Necker*, i., 35).

On the famous passage in the text where Gibbon says "I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son," he has the following note: "See *Œuvres de Rousseau*, tom. xxxiii., pp. 88, 89, octavo edition. As an author I shall not appeal from the judgment, or taste, or caprice of *Jean Jacques:* but that extraordinary man, whom I admire and pity, should have been less precipitate in condemning the moral character and conduct of a stranger."

Sainte-Beuve, referring to this passage writes: "Gibbon se dégagea envers mademoiselle Curchod bien plus tard qu'on ne pourrait le supposer, et cinq ans seulement après avoir quitté la Suisse. On n'a pas assez remarqué que c'est de Gibbon qu'il s'agit dans une lettre de Jean-Jacques Rousseau à Moulton, datée de Motiers et du 4 juin 1763: 'Vous me

donnez pour mademoiselle Curchod, écrit Jean-Jacques, une commission dont je m'acquitterai mal, précisément à cause de mon estime pour elle. Le refroidissement de M. Gibbon me fait mal penser de lui ; j'ai revu son livre (l'*Essai sur l'étude de la littérature*). Il y court après l'esprit ; il s'y guinde. M. Gibbon n'est point mon homme : je ne puis croire qu'il soit celui de mademoiselle Curchod. Qui ne sent pas son prix n'est pas digne d'elle ; mais qui l'a pu sentir et s'en détache est un homme à mépriser.' Gibbon a l'honnêteté de renvoyer à cette lettre où les noms étaient restés masqués par des initiales" (*Causeries du Lundi*, viii., 440).

Gibbon landed in England on 4th May, 1758. It was not till 24th August, 1762, that he broke off the engagement. In May, 1763, Moulton, a Swiss pastor, a friend both of Mlle. Curchod and Rousseau, wrote to tell her that Rousseau, who was living at Motiers, had heard from a lady at Paris "qu'une foule d'Anglais alloit partir de Paris pour Motiers. *Si M. Gibbon*, ajoute-t-elle, *est du nombre, recevès* [sic] *le bien, car c'est un homme d'un très grand mérite et fort instruit.* Sur cela (pardonnés [*sic*] le moy, chère Belle) je fis votre histoire à Rousseau, et cette histoire l'intéressa fort. . . . Il me promit que, si Gibbon venoit, il ne manqueroit pas de lui parler de vous, et de lui en parler d'une manière très avantageuse." Gibbon did not go to Motiers and so did not see Rousseau. On his arrival at Lausanne she let him know by a letter from Geneva that he was still dear to her. This letter was preserved, but not his answer. Her rejoinder, dated 4th June, 1763, shows that it had given her great pain. Nevertheless she could not have lost all hope, for she asked for his friendship, and offered to provide him with an introduction to Rousseau. She begged him moreover to keep up a correspondence with her, and to meet her. He replied: "Mais cette correspondance, mademoiselle, j'en sens tous les agréments, mais en même temps j'en sens tout le danger. Je le conçois par rapport à moi, je le crains pour tous les deux. Permettez que le silence m'en dérobe."

Some weeks later she met him by chance at Ferney, and was treated by him with harshness. On Sept. 21 she wrote to him: "Intimidée et accablée à Fernex par le jeu continuel d'une gayeté forcée et par la dureté de vos réponses, mes lèvres tremblantes refusèrent absolument de me servir ; vous m'assurâtes en d'autres termes que vous rougissiez pour moi du rôle que je soutenois ; monsieur, je n'ai jamais su confondre les droits de l'honnêteté avec ceux de l'amour-propre". She goes on to remind him that he had asked her to marry him without waiting for his father's consent, and that for love of him she had refused an advantageous offer. In spite of all reports to the contrary she had, she maintained, been faithful to him. She continued: "Oui, je commence à le croire, vous auriez gémi sur mon existence ; elle pouvait nuire à vos projets de fortune ou d'ambition" (*Le Salon de Madame Necker*, par le Vicomte d'Haussonville, 1882, i., 57-76). For some letters of his to her written during his first residence in Lausanne see *ib.*, i., 39-53.

D'Haussonville, to make the matter worse, says that in 1758 "le père de Gibbon était très âgé". He was only fifty-one, so that the son could not have counted on an early independence.

Gibbon's suspicions that she had been looking out for another match are somewhat justified by a letter she wrote to Moulton in 1764, when it seemed likely, but not certain, that Necker would offer to marry her. "Mais, si notre brillante chimère s'évanouit, j'épouse Correvon (c'est le nom de l'avocat d'Yverdon) l'été prochain. Il ne cesse de me persécuter, et tous mes parens avec lui" (*ib.*, i., 105). At that time, at all events, she had two strings to her bow.

Over Gibbon a great change had come in his five years' absence. In his first long residence at Lausanne under the pastor's roof his life, so far as we know, had been innocent. "J'avais une très belle réputation ici pour les mœurs," he wrote soon after his return (*ante*, p. 158, *n.*). In those early days he had not "kept his wing'd affections clipt with crime". The coarse minds and brutal

habits of his brother-officers in the Militia must have left their taint on him. In Paris, whence he came straight to Lausanne, he had indulged in a guilty love. How deep the corruption had entered he showed in the letter which he wrote three years later (*ante*, p. 153, *n.*). During his tour in Italy Mlle. Curchod became Mme. Necker. On his way home he saw a great deal of the newly-married couple in their house in Paris, though he says nothing of this in his *Autobiography*. What he thought of her and what she thought of him is told in the two following letters. On Oct. 31, 1765, he wrote to Holroyd: "The Curchod (Necker) I saw at Paris. She was very fond of me, and the husband particularly civil. Could they insult me more cruelly? Ask me every evening to supper; go to bed, and leave me alone with his wife—what an impertinent security! It is making an old lover of mighty little consequence. She is as handsome as ever, and much genteeler; seems pleased with her fortune rather than proud of it. I was (perhaps indiscreetly enough) exalting Nanette de Illen's good luck and the fortune. 'What fortune?' said she, with an air of contempt—'not above 20,000 livres a year.' I smiled, and she caught herself immediately. 'What airs I give myself in despising 20,000 livres a year, who a year ago looked upon 800 as the summit of my wishes'" (*Corres.*, i., 81).

A week later she wrote to Mme. de Brenles: "Je ne sais, Madame, si je vous ai dit que j'ai vu Gibbon; j'ai été sensible à ce plaisir au-delà de toute expression, non qu'il me reste aucun sentiment pour un homme qui je crois n'en mérite guère; mais ma vanité féminine n'a jamais eu un triomphe plus complet et plus honnête. Il a resté deux semaines à Paris; je l'ai eu tous les jours chez moi; il était devenu doux, souple, humble, décent jusqu'à la pudeur; témoin perpétuel de la tendresse de mon mari, de son esprit, et de son enjouement; admirateur zélé de l'opulence, il me fit remarquer pour la première fois celle qui m'entoure, ou du moins jusqu'alors elle n'avait fait sur moi qu'une sensation désagréable" (*Lettres Diverses Recueillies en Suisse*, par le Comte Fédor Golowkin, 1821, p. 265).

"The de Brenles mansion was in front of the door of La Grotte, the home of Deyverdun and Gibbon. It was demolished in January, 1896, some months before La Grotte was destroyed" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 312).

21. ENGLISH HISTORIANS (p. 122).

(1716.) "Our country, which has produced writers of the first figure in every other kind of work, has been very barren in good historians" (Addison, *The Freeholder*, No. 35).

(1734.) Voltaire (*Œuvres*, xxiv., 137), after speaking of English poets and philosophers, continues: "Pour de bons historiens, je ne leur en connais pas encore; il a fallu qu'un Français [Rapin] ait écrit leur histoire".

(1735.) "Our nation has furnished as ample and as important matter, good and bad, for history, as any nation under the sun; and yet we must yield the palm in writing history most certainly to the Italians and to the French, and I fear even to the Germans" (Bolingbroke, *Works*, ed. 1809, iii., 454).

(1751.) "It is observed that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius" (Johnson, *The Rambler*, No. 122).

(1754.) "It could not perhaps be too much to affirm that Camden's *History of Queen Elizabeth* is among the best historical productions which have yet been composed by any Englishman. It is well known that the English have not much excelled in that kind of literature" (Hume, *History of England*, ed. 1773, vi., 195).

(1755.) "Avec un peu de franchise, et si nous voulons nous rendre une

justice exacte, il faut même convenir que le talent d'historien a disparu avec les anciens, et qu'à un Français et deux ou trois Italiens près, les modernes n'ont eu personne qui puisse être cité. Plaçons Guichardin, Davila, M. de Thou à une distance convenable de Plutarque, de Tite-Live, et de Tacite, et tout le reste des modernes à une distance infinie des premiers" (Baron de Grimm, *Mémoires Historiques*, &c., ed. 1814, i., 168).

(1761.) "Our writers had commonly so ill succeeded in history; the Italians, and even the French, had so long continued our acknowledged superiors, that it was almost feared that the British genius, which had so happily displayed itself in every other kind of writing, and had gained the prize in most, yet could not enter the list in this. The historical work Mr. Hume first published discharged our country from this opprobrium" (Burke (?), *Annual Register*, 1761, ii., 301).

(1770.) "I believe this is the historical age, and this [the Scotch] the historical nation" (Hume, *Letters of Hume to Strahan*, p. 155).

(1828.) "The historians of our own country are unequalled in depth and precision of reason; and even in the works of our mere compilers we often meet with speculations beyond the reach of Thucydides or Tacitus" (Macaulay, *Misc. Writings*, ed. 1871, p. 153).

(1849.) "The truth is that I admire no historians much except Herodotus, Thucydides, and Tacitus. Perhaps, in his way, a very peculiar way, I might add Fra Paolo. The modern writers who have most of the great qualities of the ancient masters of history are some memoir writers; St. Simon for example. There is merit, no doubt, in Hume, Robertson, Voltaire, and Gibbon. Yet it is not the thing" (Macaulay, *Trevelyan's Life*, ed. 1877, ii., 270).

Condorcet says, in his *Life of Voltaire:* "Voltaire a l'honneur d'avoir fait, dans la manière d'écrire l'histoire, une révolution dont à la vérité l'Angleterre a presque seule profité jusqu'ici. Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, Watson [*History of Philip II.*], peuvent, à quelques égards, être regardés comme sortis de son école" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, lxiv., 90).

"Hume," said Johnson, "would never have written History, had not Voltaire written it before him. He is an echo of Voltaire" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 53). "Hume's manner," wrote Horace Walpole, "is imitated from Voltaire" (Walpole's *Letters*, ii., 429).

22. ROBERTSON AND HUME (p. 122).

Gibbon wrote to Robertson in 1783: "I will frankly own that my pride is elated as often as I find myself ranked in the triumvirate of British Historians of the present age, and though I feel myself the Lepidus, I contemplate with pleasure the superiority of my colleagues" (Dugald Stewart's *Life of Robertson*, ed. 1811, p. 305). Lepidus was the "slight unmeritable man" joined with Antony and Octavius (*Julius Cæsar*, iv., 1., 12). Five years later Gibbon wrote again to Robertson: "The praise which has ever been the most flattering to my ear is to find my name associated with the names of Robertson and Hume; and provided I can maintain my place in the triumvirate, I am indifferent at what distance I am ranked below my companions and masters" (*Life of Robertson*, ed. 1811, p. 367). In *The Decline*, vii., 296, he says that "Guicciardini and Machiavel, Fra Paolo, and Davila were justly esteemed the first historians of modern languages, till, in the present age, Scotland arose, to dispute the prize with Italy herself". He thus praises Robertson: "The eloquence of a modern historian has rendered the name of Charles V. so familiar to an English reader" (*ib.*, i., 385). In the Preface to the second half of the History (*ib.*, i., Preface, p. 11) he speaks of him as "a master-artist". In his *Vindication* he calls him "the first historian of the present age" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 516). See also *ante*, p. 195.

Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son on April 16, 1759: "There is an History lately come out of the Reign of Mary, Queen of Scots, and her son (no matter by whom) King James, written by one Robertson, a Scotchman, which for clearness, purity, and dignity of style I will not scruple to compare with the best historians extant, not excepting Davila, Guicciardini, and perhaps Livy" (*Letters to his Son*, iv., 178).

Johnson reproached Robertson with "verbiage". "If Robertson's style be faulty, he owes it to me; that is having too many words, and those too big ones" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 236; iii., 173).

Hume he accused of gallicisms. "Why, Sir, his style is not English; the structure of his sentences is French" (*ib.*, i., 439). "I told Johnson," writes Boswell, "that David Hume had made a short collection of Scotticisms. 'I wonder (said he) that *he* should find them'" (*ib.*, ii., 72). Strahan, the printer, Dr. Beattie tells us, "had corrected the phraseology of both Hume and Robertson" (Forbes's *Beattie*, ed. 1824, p. 341). Johnson, most likely, had helped Strahan in correcting Robertson (Johnson's *Letters*, i., 412).

Lord Mansfield told Dr. A. Carlyle that "when he was reading Hume and Robertson's books he did not think he was reading English" (Dr. A. Carlyle's *Auto.*, p. 516).

On the other hand Horace Walpole, in 1755, said of Hume's *History* in its first edition, and not in its later ones, which were cleared of many inaccuracies of style: "His style, which is the best we have in history, and his manner imitated from Voltaire, are very pleasing" (Walpole's *Letters*, ii., 429). In 1791 he wrote: "As Dr. Robertson has not the genius, penetration, sagacity, and art of Mr. Gibbon, he cannot melt his materials together, and make them elucidate, and even improve and produce, new discoveries; in short, he cannot, like Mr Gibbon, make an *original* picture with some bits of Mosaic" (*ib.*, ix., 361).

Cowper, writing to John Newton in 1783 of "the two most renowned writers of history the present day has seen," continues: "In your style I see no affectation. In every line of theirs I see nothing else. They disgust me always, Robertson with his pomp and his strut, and Gibbon with his finical and French manners" (Southey's *Cowper*, iv., 291).

Lord Brougham, whose mother was Robertson's niece, wrote in 1838: "I have some little knack of narrative, the most difficult by far of all styles, and never yet attained in perfection but by Hume and Livy" (Macvey Napier, *Corres.*, p. 239).

"Are there not in the *Dissertation on India*, the last of Dr. Robertson's works . . . Scotticisms at which a London apprentice would laugh?" (Macaulay's *Essays*, ed. 1874, iv., 181.)

"Hume," writes Bagehot, "is always idiomatic, but his idioms are constantly wrong; many of his best passages are on that account curiously grating and puzzling; you feel that they are very like what an Englishman would say; but yet that, after all, somehow or other, they are what he never would say. There is a minute seasoning of imperceptible difference which distracts your attention, and which you are for ever stopping to analyse" (*Biog. Studies*, i., 272).

Saint-Beuve, after quoting Gibbon's praise of Hume, continues: "Cette parole est bien celle d'un homme de goût qui apprécie Xénophon [*ante*, p. 92]. On a si souvent dans ces dernières années déclaré David Hume vaincu et surpassé, que je me plais à rappeler un témoignage si vif et si délicatement rendu" (*Causeries*, viii., 445).

Carlyle, in 1818, wrote of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon: "The whole historical triumvirate are abundantly destitute of virtuous feeling—or indeed of any feeling at all" (*Early Letters of Carlyle*, i., 143).

23. A STANDING ARMY (p. 135).

The general dislike of a standing army is shown in Dryden's lines (*Palamon and Arcite*, iii., 671):—

> "Laughed all the powers who favour tyranny,
> And all the standing army of the sky."

The following extracts illustrating this dislike I have arranged in order of time:—

(1707.) "There is not a more disagreeable thought to the people of Great Britain than that of a standing army" (Addison, *Works*, ed. 1864, iv., 356).

(1726.) "Above all, he [the King of Brobdingnag] was amazed to hear me talk of a mercenary standing army, in the midst of peace, and among a free people" (Swift, *Works*, ed. 1883, xi., 159).

(Undated.) "A standing army in England, whether in time of peace or war, is a direct absurdity" (*ib.*, ix., 257).

(1734.) "It is certain that if ever such men as call themselves friends to the government, but are real enemies of the constitution, prevail, they will make it a capital point of their wicked policy to keep up a standing army" (Lord Bolingbroke, *Works*, ed. 1809, iii., 164).

(1735.) Lord Hervey (*Memoirs*, ii., 80), talking in 1735 to Queen Caroline, "who loved troops full as well as the King," said that "as a standing army was the thing in the world that was most disliked in this country, so the reduction of any part of it was a measure that always made any Prince more popular than any other he could take".

(1742, during the war with Spain.) "April 29.—We had a debate yesterday in the House on a proposal for replacing four thousand men of some that are to be sent abroad, that, in short, we might have fifteen thousand men to guard the Kingdom. This was strongly opposed by the Tories, but we carried it by 280 against 139" (Horace Walpole, *Letters*, i., 159).

(1730-45.) In the Index to *The Gent. Mag.* for these years there are fifty entries under the head, "Army, standing, for and against".

(1757.) "A standing army of mercenary troops always at last begin to look upon themselves as the masters of that country where they are kept up" (Earl Stanhope, *Parl. Hist.*, xv., 710).

(1757.) "That foreign weed called a standing army. Such an army never was the natural produce of this kingdom, and while it is under its present regulation, I can hardly call those that belong to it Englishmen" (Duke of Bedford, *ib.*, p. 720).

(1761.) "It cannot but offend every Englishman to see troops of soldiers placed between him and his sovereign" (Johnson, *Works*, v., 458).

(1765.) "Nothing then . . . ought to be more guarded against in a free state than making the military power, when such a one is necessary to be kept on foot, a body too distinct from the people. Like ours, therefore, it should wholly be composed of natural subjects; it ought only to be enlisted for a short and limited time; the soldiers also should live intermixed with the people; no separate camp, no barracks, no inland fortresses should be allowed" (Blackstone, *Comment.*, ed. 1775, i., 414).

(1781.) "The invincible jealousy of military power, which had so long characterised this country, grew familiarised to the aspect of camps and garrisons" (Burke, *Ann. Reg.*, 1781, i., 138).

24. AN EXTRACT FROM GIBBON'S JOURNAL—LIFE IN THE MILITIA (p. 135).

Journal, 1761, January 11.—In these seven or eight months of a most disagreeably active life, I have had no studies to set down; indeed, I hardly

took a book in my hand the whole time. The first two months at Blandford, I might have done something; but the novelty of the thing, of which for some time I was so fond as to think of going into the army, our field-days, our dinners abroad, and the drinking and late hours we got into, prevented any serious reflections. From the day we marched from Blandford I had hardly a moment I could call my own, almost continually in motion; if I was fixed for a day, it was in the guard-room, a barrack, or an inn. Our disputes consumed the little time I had left. Every letter, every memorial relative to them fell to my share; and our evening conferences were used to hear all the morning hours strike. At last I got to Dover, and Sir Thomas [*ante*, p. 136] left us for two months. The charm was over, I was sick of so hateful a service; I was settled in a comparatively quiet situation. Once more I began to taste the pleasure of thinking.

Recollecting some thoughts I had formerly had in relation to the system of Paganism, which I intended to make use of in my Essay, I resolved to read Tully *de Naturâ Deorum*, and finished it in about a month. I lost some time before I could recover my habit of application.

October 23.—Our first design was to march through Marlborough; but finding on inquiry that it was a bad road, and a great way about, we resolved to push for the Devizes in one day, though nearly thirty miles. We accordingly arrived there about three o'clock in the afternoon.

November 2. [This date evidently marks the beginning, and not the end, of a period.]—I have very little to say for this and the following month. Nothing could be more uniform than the life I led there. The little civility of the neighbouring gentlemen gave us no opportunity of dining out; the time of year did not tempt us to any excursions round the country; and at first my indolence, and afterwards a violent cold, prevented my going over to Bath. I believe in the two months I never dined or lay from quarters. I can therefore only set down what I did in the literary way. Designing to recover my Greek, which I had somewhat neglected, I set myself to read Homer, and finished the four first books of the *Iliad*, with Pope's translation and notes; at the same time, to understand the geography of the *Iliad*, and particularly the catalogue, I read the books 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 13th, and 14th of Strabo, in Casaubon's Latin translation; I likewise read Hume's *History of England* to the Reign of Henry the Seventh, just published, *ingenious but superficial*; and the *Journal des Sçavans* for August, September, and October, 1761, with the *Bibliothèque des Sciences*, &c., from July to October. Both these Journals speak very handsomely of my book.

December 25, 1761.—When, upon finishing the year, I take a review of what I have done, I am not dissatisfied with what I did in it, upon making proper allowances. On the one hand, I could begin nothing before the middle of January. The Deal duty lost me part of February; although I was at home part of March, and all April, yet electioneering is no friend to the Muses. May, indeed, though dissipated by our sea parties, was pretty quiet; but June was absolutely lost, upon the march, at Alton, and settling ourselves in camp. The four succeeding months in camp allowed me little leisure and less quiet. November and December were indeed as much my own as any time can be whilst I remain in the militia; but still it is, at best, not a life for a man of letters. However, in this tumultuous year (besides smaller things which I have set down) I read four books of Homer in Greek, six of Strabo in Latin, Cicero *de Naturâ Deorum*, and the great philosophical and theological work of M. de Beausobre: I wrote in the same time a long dissertation on the succession of Naples [*ante*, p. 144]; reviewed, fitted for the press, and augmented above a fourth, my Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature [*ante*, p. 126].

In the six weeks I passed at Beriton, as I never stirred from it, every day was like the former. I had neither visits, hunting, or walking. My only resources were myself, my books, and family conversations.—But to me these were great resources.

April 24, 1762.—I waited upon Colonel Harvey in the morning, to get him to apply for me to be brigade-major to Lord Effingham, as a post I should be very fond of, and for which I am not unfit. Harvey received me with great good nature and candour, told me he was both willing and able to serve me; that indeed he had already applied to Lord Effingham for Leake, one of his own officers, and though there would be more than one brigade-major, he did not think he could properly recommend two; but that if I could get some other person to break the ice, he would second it, and believed he should succeed: should that fail, as Leake was in bad circumstances, he believed he could make a compromise with him (this was my desire) to let me do the duty without pay. I went from him to the Mallets, who promised to get Sir Charles Howard to speak to Lord Effingham.

May 8.—This was my birthday, on which I entered into the twenty-sixth year of my age. This gave me occasion to look a little into myself, and consider impartially my good and bad qualities. It appeared to me, upon this inquiry, that my character was virtuous, incapable of a base action, and formed for generous ones; but that it was proud, violent, and disagreeable in society. These qualities I must endeavour to cultivate, extirpate, or restrain, according to their different tendency. Wit I have none. My imagination is rather strong than pleasing. My memory both capacious and retentive. The shining qualities of my understanding are extensiveness and penetration; but I want both quickness and exactness. As to my situation in life, though I may sometimes repine at it, it perhaps is the best adapted to my character. I can command all the conveniences of life, and I can command too that independence (that first earthly blessing), which is hardly to be met with in a higher or lower fortune. When I talk of my situation, I must exclude that temporary one, of being in the militia. Though I go through it with spirit and application, it is both unfit for, and unworthy of me.

August 22.—I went with Ballard to the French church [at Southampton], where I heard a most indifferent sermon preached by M. . . . A very bad style, a worse pronunciation and action, and a very great vacuity of ideas, composed this excellent performance. Upon the whole, which is preferable, the philosophic method of the English, or the rhetoric of the French preachers? The first (though less glorious) is certainly safer for the preacher. It is difficult for a man to make himself ridiculous, who proposes only to deliver plain sense on a subject he has thoroughly studied. But the instant he discovers the least pretentions towards the sublime, or the pathetic, there is no medium; we must either admire or laugh: and there are so many various talents requisite to form the character of an orator, that it is more than probable we shall laugh. As to the advantage of the hearer, which ought to be the great consideration, the dilemma is much greater. Excepting in some particular cases, where we are blinded by popular prejudices, we are in general so well acquainted with our duty, that it is almost superfluous to convince us of it. It is the heart, and not the head, that holds out; and it is certainly possible, by a moving eloquence, to rouse the sleeping sentiments of that heart, and incite it to acts of virtue. Unluckily it is not so much acts, as habits of virtue, we should have in view; and the preacher who is inculcating, with the eloquence of a Bourdaloue, the necessity of a virtuous life, will dismiss his assembly full of emotions, which a variety of other objects, the coldness of our northern constitutions, and no immediate opportunity of exerting their good resolutions, will dissipate in a few moments.

August 24.—The same reason that carried so many people to the assembly to-night, was what kept me away; I mean the dancing.

August 28.—To-day Sir Thomas came to us to dinner. The Spa has done him a great deal of good, for he looks another man. Pleased to see him, we kept bumperising till after roll-calling; Sir Thomas assuring us, every fresh bottle, how infinitely soberer he was grown.

August 29.—I felt the usual consequences of Sir Thomas's company, and

lost a morning, because I had lost the day before. However, having finished Voltaire, I returned to Le Clerc (I mean for the amusement of my leisure hours); and laid aside for some time his *Bibliothèque Universelle*, to look into the *Bibliothèque Choisie*, which is by far the better work.

September 23. Colonel Wilkes, of the Buckinghamshire Militia, dined with us, and renewed the acquaintance Sir Thomas and myself had begun with him at Reading. I scarcely ever met with a better companion; he has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge; but a thorough profligate in principle as in practice, his life stained with every vice, and his conversation full of blasphemy and indecency. These morals he glories in—for shame is a weakness he has long since surmounted. He told us himself, that in this time of public dissension he was resolved to make his fortune. Upon this noble principle he has connected himself closely with Lord Temple and Mr Pitt, commenced a public adversary to Lord Bute, whom he abuses weekly in the *North Briton*, and other political papers in which he is concerned. This proved a very debauched day: we drank a good deal both after dinner and supper; and when at last Wilkes had retired, Sir Thomas and some others (of whom I was not one) broke into his room, and made him drink a bottle of claret in bed.

October 5.—The review, which lasted about three hours, concluded, as usual, with marching by Lord Effingham, by grand divisions. Upon the whole, considering the camp had done both the Winchester and the Gosport duties all the summer, they behaved very well, and made a fine appearance. As they marched by, I had my usual curiosity to count their files. The following is my field return: I think it a curiosity; I am sure it is more exact than is commonly made to a reviewing general.

		No. of Files.		No. of Men.		Establishment.
Berkshire,	Grenadiers, 19 Battalion, 72	91	—	273	—	560
W. Essex,	Grenadiers, 15 Battalion, 80	95	—	285	—	480
S. Glôster,	Grenadiers, 20 Battalion, 84	104	—	312	—	600
N. Glôster,	Grenadiers, 13 Battalion, 52	65	—	195	—	360
Lancashire,	Grenadiers, 20 Battalion, 88	108	—	324	—	800
Wiltshire,	Grenadiers, 24 Battalion, 120	144	—	432	—	800
	Total,	607		1,821		3,600

N.B.—The Gosport detachment from the Lancashire consisted of two hundred and fifty men. The Buckinghamshire took the Winchester duty that day.

So that this camp in England, supposed complete, with only one detachment, had under arms, on the day of the grand review, little more than half their establishment. This amazing deficiency (though exemplified in every regiment I have seen) is an extraordinary military phœnomenon: what must it be upon foreign service? I doubt whether a nominal army of an hundred thousand men often brings fifty into the field.

Upon our return to Southampton in the evening, we found Sir Thomas Worsley.

October 21.—One of those impulses, which it is neither very easy nor very necessary to withstand, drew me from Longinus to a very different subject, the Greek Calendar. Last night, when in bed, I was thinking of a dissertation of M. de la Nauze upon the Roman calendar, which I read last year.

This led me to consider what was the Greek, and finding myself very ignorant of it, I determined to read a short, but very excellent abstract of Mr. Dodwell's book de Cyclis, by the famous Dr. Halley. It is only twenty-five pages; but as I meditated it thoroughly, and verified all the calculations, it was a very good morning's work.

October 28.—I looked over a new Greek Lexicon which I have just received from London. It is that of Robert Constantine, Lugdun, 1637. It is a very large volume in folio, in two parts, comprising in the whole 1,785 pages. After the great Thesaurus, this is esteemed the best Greek Lexicon. It seems to be so. Of a variety of words for which I looked, I always found an exact definition; the various senses well distinguished, and properly supported, by the best authorities. However, I still prefer the radical method of Scapula to this alphabetical one.

December 11.—I have already given an idea of the Gosport duty; I shall only add a trait which characterises admirably our unthinking sailors. At a time when they knew that they should infallibly be discharged in a few weeks, numbers, who had considerable wages due to them, were continually jumping over the walls, and risquing the losing of it for a few hours' amusement at Portsmouth.

December 17.—We found old Captain Meard at Arlesford, with the second division of the fourteenth. He and all his officers supped with us, and made the evening rather a drunken one.

December 18.—About the same hour our two corps paraded to march off. They, an old corps of regulars, who had been two years quiet in Dover Castle. We, part of a young body of militia, two-thirds of our men recruits, of four months' standing, two of which they had passed upon very disagreeable duty. Every advantage was on their side, and yet our superiority, both as to appearance and discipline, was so striking, that the most prejudiced regular could not have hesitated a moment. At the end of the town our two companies separated; my father's struck off for Petersfield, whilst I continued my route to Alton; into which place I marched my company about noon; two years six months and fifteen days after my first leaving it. I gave the men some beer at roll-calling, which they received with great cheerfulness and decency. I dined and lay at Harrison's, where I was received with that old-fashioned breeding, which is at once so honourable and so troublesome.

December 23.—Our two companies were disembodied; mine at Alton, and my father's at Beriton. Smith marched them over from Petersfield: they fired three volleys, lodged the major's colours, delivered up their arms, received their money, partook of a dinner at the major's expense, and then separated with great cheerfulness and regularity. Thus ended the militia; I may say ended, since our annual assemblies in May are so very precarious, and can be of so little use. However, our serjeants and drums are still kept up, and quartered at the rendezvous of their company, and the adjutant remains at Southampton in full pay.

As this was an extraordinary scene of life, in which I was engaged above three years and a half from the date of my commission, and above two years and a half from the time of our embodying, I cannot take my leave of it without some few reflections. When I engaged in it, I was totally ignorant of its nature and consequences. I offered, because my father did, without ever imagining that we should be called out, till it was too late to retreat with honour. Indeed, I believe it happens throughout, that our most important actions have been often determined by chance, caprice, or some very inadequate motive. After our embodying, many things contributed to make me support it with great impatience. Our continual disputes with the duke of Bolton; our unsettled way of life, which hardly allowed me books or leisure for study; and more than all, the disagreeable society in which I was forced to live.

After mentioning my sufferings, I must say something of what I found

agreeable. Now it is over, I can make the separation much better than I could at the time. 1. The unsettled way of life itself had its advantages. The exercise and change of air and of objects amused me, at the same time that it fortified my health. 2. A new field of knowledge and amusement opened itself to me; that of military affairs, which, both in my studies and travels, will give me eyes for a new world of things, which before would have passed unheeded. Indeed, in that respect I can hardly help wishing our battalion had continued another year. We had got a fine set of new men, all our difficulties were over; we were perfectly well clothed and appointed; and, from the progress our recruits had already made, we could promise ourselves that we should be one of the best militia corps by next summer; a circumstance that would have been the more agreeable to me, as I am now established the real acting major of the battalion. But what I value most, is the knowledge it has given me of mankind in general, and of my own country in particular. The general system of our government, the methods of our several offices, the departments and powers of their respective officers, our provincial and municipal administration, the views of our several parties, the characters, connections, and influence of our principal people, have been impressed on my mind, not by vain theory, but by the indelible lessons of action and experience. I have made a number of valuable acquaintance, and am myself much better known, than (with my reserved character) I should have been in ten years, passing regularly my summers at Beriton, and my winters in London. So that the sum of all is, that I am glad the militia has been, and glad that it is no more.

25. GENIUS (p. 143).

Dean Barnard, addressing Reynolds, wrote:—

"Thou say'st not only skill is gained,
But genius, too, may be obtained,
By studious imitation".

(Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 432).

Reynolds, in his *Third Discourse*, speaking of "the *gusto grande* of the Italians, the *beau idéal* of the French, and the *great style*, *genius*, and *taste* among the English," continues: "It is this intellectual dignity, they say, that ennobles the painter's art, that lays the line between him and the mere mechanic; and produces those great effects in an instant, which eloquence and poetry, by slow and repeated efforts, are scarcely able to attain. . . . The student examines his own mind, and perceives there nothing of that divine inspiration. . . . He never travelled to Heaven to gather new ideas, and he finds himself possessed of no other qualification than what mere common observation and a plain understanding can confer. Thus he thinks it hopeless to pursue an object which he supposes out of the reach of human industry" (Reynolds's *Works*, ed. 1824, i., 44).

According to Northcote (*Life of Reynolds*, i., 11), "Sir Joshua regarded ambition as the *cause* of eminence, but accident as pointing out the means". This he might have got from Hume as well as from Johnson. "A man's genius," wrote Hume, "is always in the beginning of life as much unknown to himself as to others. . . . A noble emulation is the source of every excellence" (Hume's *Essays*, ed. 1770, i., 160).

Blake attacked Reynolds's *Third Discourse*. "It is," he wrote, "particularly interesting to blockheads, as it endeavours to prove that there is no such thing as inspiration, and that any man of a plain understanding may, by thieving from others, become a Michael Angelo" (Gilchrist's *Blake*, i., 261). Blake misrepresents Reynolds, who would have maintained, with Johnson, that "the true genius is a mind of large general powers, accident-

ally determined to some particular direction" (Johnson's *Works*, vii., 1). "I am persuaded," said Johnson, "that had Sir Isaac Newton applied to poetry he would have made a very fine epick poem. I could as easily apply to law as to tragick poetry" (Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 35). (Newton, by the way, "being asked his opinion of poetry, quoted a sentiment of Barrow, that it was ingenious nonsense" (Warton's *Pope's Works*, iii., 177)). Newton, writing about his *Treatise on the Solar System*, said: "If I have done the public any service this way, it is due to nothing but industry and patient thought" (Bentley's *Works*, ed. 1836, ii., 203). "I know of no such thing as genius," said Hogarth; "genius is nothing but labour and diligence" (Seward's *Biographiana*, p. 293).

Sir Walter Scott, speaking of

> "That secret power by all obeyed,"

continues :—

> "Whether an impulse that has birth
> Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
> One with our feelings and our powers,
> And rather part of us than ours;
> Or whether fitlier termed the sway
> Of habit, formed in early day;
> Howe'er derived, its force confest
> Rules with despotic sway the breast"

(*Marmion*, Intro. to Canto iii.).

26. ELVIRA (p. 148).

Gibbon recorded on Jan. 19, 1763: "My father and I went to the Rose, in the passage of the play-house, where we found Mallet, with about thirty friends. We dined together, and went thence into the pit, where we took our places in a body, ready to silence all opposition. However, we had no occasion to exert ourselves. Notwithstanding the malice of party, Mallet's nation [Scotch], connections, and indeed imprudence, we heard nothing but applause. I think it was deserved." Gibbon, who had been calling on the French ambassador, "undressed for the play" (*Misc. Works*, i., 157).

Elvira was brought out at Drury Lane. "The part of Don Pedro was the last new character Garrick ever acted." According to Davies, he was flattered into accepting the play. Mallet received £1,000, as well as a yearly pension, from the Marlborough family for writing a Life of the great Duke. Not a line of it did he ever write. "'Do you know, my friend,' he said to Garrick, 'that I have found out a pretty snug niche in it for you?' 'Heh! how; that for me!' said the manager, turning quickly upon him, his eyes sparkling with fire. 'How the devil could you bring me into the history of Marlborough?' 'That's my business,' rejoined Mallet; 'but I tell you I have done it.' 'Well, Mallet, you have the art of surprising your friends in the most unexpected manner; but why won't you now, who are so well qualified, write something for the stage?'" *Elvira* was produced (Davies's *Garrick*, ii., 57). Johnson, in his *Life of Mallet*, tells the same story.

Had Gibbon stayed a few days longer in London he might have seen the play interrupted by a riot. "On Jan. 25, a paper was dispersed in the taverns and coffee-houses, complaining of the Managers of the Theatres for refusing admittance at the end of the third act for half-price. When Mr. Holland came in to speak the prologue to *Elvira* he was hissed off." Garrick could not get a hearing. "The benches were torn up, the glass lustres were

broken; about nine the house was cleared, the money being returned." Garrick yielded to the mob (*Gent. Mag.*, 1763, p. 31). The play did not run many nights longer, in spite of Mallet's "acquainting him that he had received forty cards from persons of distinction, all of whom desired to know the reason why his play was stopped" (Davies's *Garrick*, ii., 59). "His dramas," writes Johnson, "had their day, a short day, and are forgotten" (Johnson's *Works*, viii., 466).

27. L'ANGLOMANIE (p. 151).

Voltaire begins a letter to the *Gazette littéraire*, dated Nov. 14, 1764, *sur l'Anglomanie*: "Mille gens, messieurs, s'élèvent et déclament contre l'anglomanie: j'ignore ce qu'ils entendent par ce mot. S'ils veulent parler de la fureur de travestir en modes ridicules quelques usages utiles, de transformer un déshabillé commode en un vêtement malpropre, de saisir jusqu'à des jeux nationaux pour y mettre des grimaces à la place de la gravité, ils pourraient avoir raison; mais si par hasard ces déclamateurs prétendaient nous faire un crime du désir d'étudier, d'observer, de philosopher, comme les Anglais, ils auraient certainement bien tort" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xliii., 320). In 1771 he wrote: "Vous savez que tous les gens de lettres apprennent aujourd'hui l'anglais" (*ib.*, lv., 519).

Horace Walpole (*Letters*, iv., 466) wrote to Gray from Paris on Jan. 25, 1766: "The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness."

Grimm, who visited England for the first time in 1790, was full of admiration. He speaks of the well-kept fields, the green hedges, the villages with their neat cottages and shops with an air of abundance and wealth; the labouring class better clothed, housed, and fed, and steadier in their work than in France. In the inns there is, it is true, a want of napkins, and the porter, small beer, and port wine, are not to a Frenchman's taste; "mais je ne connais rien dont on se nourrisse mieux, et dont on se lasse moins que du bon *beefsteak*, des *potatoes*, du royal *plum pudding*, et de l'excellent fromage de chester". London has not nearly so many magnificent buildings as Paris; but it makes up for that by the width, regularity, and cleanliness of its streets; its foot pavements, and the endless succession and variety of its shops; by the general air of comfort, industry, and activity. The Thames and the docks, with their thousands and thousands of ships from all parts of the world, raise in the mind the noblest idea of the audacity, the power, and the success of man. In the midst of the vast population of London there is order and tranquillity. In Paris, in a single morning, you are likely to come across more confusion, more accidents, and more quarrels than in London in a fortnight. Order is kept by a small body of constables. An Englishman submits to the law, because he loves the law. He has a well-grounded confidence in himself. "Chacun dans ce pays, depuis le premier lord jusqu'au dernier *coachman*, parait savoir plus précisément que partout ailleurs *what is fair* (ce qui est juste)" (Grimm's *Mémoires*, &c., ed. 1814, vii., 391).

28. GIBBON'S ASSOCIATES IN PARIS IN 1763 (p. 152).

(*a*) Count de Caylus.

Gibbon wrote to his father on Feb. 24, 1763: "You know how much I always built upon the Count de Caylus; he has not been of the least use to me. With great difficulty I have seen him, and that is all. I do not, how-

ever, attribute his behaviour to pride, or dislike to me, but solely to the man's general character, which seems to me to be a very odd one" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 55). For its oddity see *ib.*, i., 163.

(*b*) L'Abbé de la Bléterie.

According to Grimm (*Mémoires historiques*, &c., iv., 227), Bléterie, though at his death he left more than 20,000 francs, "criait cependant toujours misère". When out supping one night, rain coming on, his coach fare was given him. "Il mit les 24 sous dans sa poche, et s'en retourna chez lui à pied." See also *ante*, p. 97.

(*c*) L'Abbé Barthélemy.

"L'Abbé Barthélemy est fort aimable, et n'a de l'antiquaire qu'une très grande érudition" (*Misc. Works*, i., 163).

(*d*) L'Abbé Raynal.

Gibbon wrote of Raynal in 1783: "His conversation, which might be very agreeable, is intolerably loud, peremptory, and insolent; and you would imagine that he alone was the monarch and legislator of the world" (*Corres.*, ii., 75). A year earlier Frederick the Great had written of him: "A la manière dont il m'a parlé de la puissance, des ressources et des richesses de tous les peuples du globe, j'ai cru m'entretenir avec la Providence" (Grimm's *Corres.*, v., 390). "There never was such an impertinent and tiresome old gossip," wrote Horace Walpole of him (*Letters*, vi., 444). Johnson put his hands behind his back, when some one brought up Raynal to introduce to him (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 435; *John. Misc.*, i., 211). Cowper, after reading aloud to Mrs. Unwin the five volumes of his *History of the Establishments, &c., of the Europeans in the Two Indies*, wrote: "He is a true patriot, but then the world is his country. . . . If he had not found that religion had undergone a mixture of artifice, perhaps he would have been a Christian" (Southey's *Cowper*, xv., 44). Romilly, who had read "the eloquent passages in his work with delight," records: "But when I came to talk on these subjects with him, he appeared to me so cold and so indifferent about them, that I conceived a very unfavourable opinion of him" (*Life of Romilly*, ed. 1840, i., 70). For Gibbon's praise of the same book, see *The Decline*, ii., 391. He adds, however, that "the total absence of quotations is the unpardonable blemish of his entertaining history" (*ib.*, ii., 312). In this Raynal was not singular. "Villaret quotes nobody, according to the last fashion of the French writers" (*ib.*, vii., 91).

(*e*) L'Abbé Arnauld.

"Il nous est tombé entre les mains, depuis peu, une réponse de M. l'abbé Arnauld à je ne sais quelle prétendue dénonciation de je ne sais quel prétendu théologien, devant je ne sais quel prétendu tribunal. Cette réponse m'a paru très supérieure à tous les ouvrages polémiques de l'autre Arnauld" (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, vii., 78). "L'autre Arnauld" was "le grand Arnauld," the Jansenist.

(*f*) De la Condamine.

Gibbon recorded in 1764: "I read M. de la Condamine's *Journal of his Travels in Italy*. I was pleased to find the heights of several mountains in fathoms, measured by the barometer. They are as follow." He goes on to make some ridiculous entries; placing the Lake of Geneva and the top of the Pyrenees at the same height above sea level—1,410 fathoms. He copies also

the heights of Mont Blanc, and the highest of the Andes, though neither had been ascended. A few days later he re-examined the *Journal*, and corrected some of these mistakes. The wonder is he ever made them (*Misc. Works*, v., 477, 479).

(*g*) Du Clos.

Gibbon recorded in 1764 of Du Clos's *Considération sur les Mœurs de ce Siècle:* "The work is in general good; some chapters treating of the connection of genius with character are excellent. Du Clos, before he was Secretary of the Academy, had been that of the Coffee-house; where he carefully treasured up the conversations of men of wit" (*Misc. Works*, v., 472). In a note on Voltaire (*Œuvres*, xii., 250) Du Clos is quoted as having said, "qu'il ne connaissait rien de plus méprisable et de plus méchant que la canaille de la littérature".

(*h*) De Ste Palaye.

Horace Walpole (*Letters*, iv., 332), writing to Dr. Warton of De Sade's *Life of Petrarch*, continues: "When you read the notes to the second volume, you will grow very impatient for Mons. de Ste Palaye's promised history of the Troubadours".

(*i*) De Bougainville.

Gibbon, on Feb. 23, 1763, mentioned Bougainville as a man "que j'ai grande envie de connaître" (*Misc. Works*, i., 162). He died the following summer. Gibbon writes of his unfinished *Mémoire sur la Monarchie des Mèdes:* "La mort, qui l'a enlevé à la société et aux lettres, ne permet plus d'espérance. Je me propose de suivre ses idées. Je donnerai quelques coups de crayon au tableau imparfait d'un grand maître. Ce maître était mon ami. Je goûte un triste plaisir dans cette occupation qui me retrace si vivement tout ce qu'il a été, et tout ce qu'il n'est plus" (*ib.*, iii., 58).

(*j*) Capperonnier.

Capperonnier was the King's Librarian. Voltaire, in 1768, thanking him for a book he had lent him from "la Bibliothéque royale," continues (*Œuvres*, liv., 491): "Il a été d'un grand secours à un pauvre feu historiographe de France, tel que moi". Voltaire, who was made "historiographe de France" in 1745, was stripped of his office in 1750 (*ib.*, xlviii., 100, 328).

(*k*) De Guignes.

De Guignes was the author of *Histoire des Huns*. Gibbon, referring to it in *The Decline*, iii., 87, says: "He has skilfully traced the footsteps of the Huns through the vast deserts of Tartary". Voltaire (*Œuvres*, xxiv., 253) laughs at him "quand il fit descendre les Chinois des Egyptiens; quand il prétendit que l'empereur de la Chine *Yu* était visiblement le roi d'Egypte Ménès, en changeant *nès* en *u*, et *me* en *y*," &c.

(*l*) Suard.

Ante, p. 134.

(*m*) Madame Geoffrin.

"Her house is a very good one; regular dinners there every Wednesday, and the best company of Paris, in men of letters and people of fashion" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 54). "She is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters,

penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 466).

According to D'Haussonville, her reception days were Monday and Wednesday, and D'Olbach's Thursday and Sunday; while Helvétius received on Tuesday and Madame Necker on Friday (*Le Salon de Madame Necker*, i., 121).

(*n*) Madame du Boccage.

She was the lady who, when Johnson visited her, "would needs make tea *à l'Anglaise*. The spout of the teapot did not pour freely; she bade the footman blow into it" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 403; see also *ib.*, iv., 331, and *John. Misc.*, ii., 291). Voltaire complimented her in verse on her imitation of *Paradise Lost*, and called her *la Sapho de Normandie* (*Œuvres*, xi., 307; xii., 342; xlviii., 167). Horace Walpole wrote of it (*Letters*, ii., 206): "My Lord Chesterfield prefers the copy to the original; but that is not uncommon for him to do, who is the patron of bad authors and bad actors".

(*o*) Helvetius.

"M. Helvétius, the author of the famous book *De l'Esprit*, has a very pretty wife, a hundred thousand livres a year, and one of the best tables in Paris. . . . From his heart, his head, and his fortune he is a most valuable man" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 53-4).

"April 5, 1764.—I was invited by my Lord Mansfield to dine with that Helvétius, but he is a professed patron of atheism, a rascal, and a scoundrel, and I would not countenance him" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 217).

About the time that Gibbon was writing his *Memoirs*, Burke wrote: "We are not the converts of Rousseau; we are not the disciples of Voltaire; Helvétius has made no progress amongst us. Atheists are not our preachers; madmen are not our law-givers" (Burke's *Works*, ed. 1808, v., 166).

(*p*) Le Baron d'Olbach.

"Le Baron a de l'esprit et des connaissances, et surtout il donne souvent et fort bien à dîner" (*Misc. Works*, i., 162). "The Baron d'Olbach is a man of parts and fortune, and has two dinners every week" (*ib.*, ii., 54). "I have left off his dinners, as there was no bearing the authors, and philosophers, and savants, of which he has a pigeon-house full" (Walpole's *Letters*, iv., 449).

(*q*) De Foncemagne.

As to the authenticity of *Le Testament politique attribué au Cardinal de Richelieu*, Foncemagne differed from Voltaire, who, in his reply, thus describes him (*Œuvres*, xxv., 367): "Un académicien connu de ses amis par la douceur de ses mœurs, et du public par ses lumières, a écrit contre mon sentiment. Son ouvrage est plein de cette sagesse et de cette politesse que son titre annonce." See also *ante*, p. 199.

29. GIBBON AMIDST THE RUINS OF THE CAPITOL (p. 167).

In the last paragraph of *The Decline* Gibbon writes: "It was among the ruins of the Capitol that I first conceived the idea of a work which has amused and exercised near twenty years of my life".

In a brief essay dated "Rome, 13th December, 1764," he shows what his musings were. Writing of "the triumphal show," he says: "I shall dwell

on one circumstance alone, more deserving the attention of a philosopher, because by it this institution is honourably distinguished from those vain and fatiguing solemnities which create nothing but weariness or contempt. The triumph converted the spectators into actors, by showing to them objects great, real, and which could not fail to move their affections. . . . The ceremonies of religion, when presented to mankind in a venerable garb, ought powerfully to interest their affections; but their influence cannot be completely felt, unless the spectators have a firm faith in the theological system on which they are founded; and unless they also feel in themselves that particular disposition of mind which lays it open to religious terrors. Such ceremonies, when they are not viewed with respect, are beheld with the contempt excited by the most ridiculous pantomime. In the triumph every circumstance was great and interesting. To receive its full impression, it was enough to be a man and a Roman. With the eyes of citizens the spectators saw the image, or rather the reality, of the public glory. The treasures which were carried in procession, the most precious monuments of art, the bloody spoils of the enemy, exhibited a faithful picture of the war, and illustrated the importance of the conquest. A silent but forcible language instructed the Romans in the exploits and valour of their countrymen: symbols chosen with taste showed to them the cities, rivers, mountains, the scenes of their national enterprise, and even the gods of their prostrate enemies subdued under the majesty of Capitoline Jupiter" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 394).

In the conclusion of *The Decline* he tells how "the footsteps of heroes, the relics, not of superstition but of empire, are devoutly visited by a new race of pilgrims from the remote, and once savage, countries of the North". In an earlier passage, *ib.*, iv., 74, after describing St. Simeon Stylites among "the monastic saints who excite only the contempt and pity of a philosopher," whose lives had been written by Theodoret, Gibbon continues: "If it be possible to measure the interval between the philosophic writings of Cicero and the sacred legend of Theodoret, between the character of Cato and that of Simeon, we may appreciate the memorable revolution which was accomplished in the Roman Empire within a period of five hundred years". His scorn, though veiled, is everywhere to be seen. Writing of the triumph of Heraclius over the Persians in A.D. 628, he says: "In the recovery of the standards and prisoners which had fallen into the hands of the Persians, the emperor imitated the example of Augustus; their care of the national dignity was celebrated by the poets of the times, but the decay of genius may be measured by the distance between Horace and George of Pisidia: the subjects and brethren of Heraclius were redeemed from persecution, slavery, and exile; but instead of the Roman eagles, the true wood of the cross was restored to the importunate demands of the successor of Constantine" (*ib.*, v., 93).

See also *Auto.*, p. 263, for "the contemptuous look he darted on the stately monuments of superstition" at Paris.

Sainte-Beuve, after quoting the passage in the text, continues: "On le voit, si une idée auguste et grandiose préside à l'inspiration de Gibbon, l'intention épigrammatique est à côté: il conçoit l'ancien ordre romain, il le révère, il l'admire; mais cet ordre non moins merveilleux qui lui a succédé avec les siècles, ce pouvoir spirituel ininterrompu des vieillards et des pontifes, cette politique qui sut être tour à tour intrépide, impérieuse et superbe, et le plus souvent prudente, il ne lui rendra pas justice, il n'y entrera pas: et de temps en temps, dans la continuité de sa grave Histoire, on croira entendre revenir comme par contraste ce chant de vêpres du premier jour, cette impression dénigrante qu'il ramènera à la sourdine" (*Causeries*, viii., 452).

30. HUME ON GIBBON'S COMPOSING IN FRENCH (p. 172).

Mr. Hume seems to have had a different opinion of this work.

"*From* Mr. Hume *to* Mr. Gibbon.

"Sir,

"It is but a few days since M. Deyverdun put your manuscript into my hands, and I have perused it with great pleasure and satisfaction. I have only one objection, derived from the language in which it is written. Why do you compose in French, and carry faggots into the wood, as Horace says with regard to the Romans who wrote in Greek? [*Sat.*, i., x., 34.] I grant that you have a like motive to those Romans, and adopt a language much more generally diffused than your native tongue: but have you not remarked the fate of those two ancient languages in following ages? The Latin, though then less celebrated, and confined to more narrow limits, has in some measure outlived the Greek, and is now more generally understood by men of letters. Let the French, therefore, triumph in the present diffusion of their tongue. Our solid and increasing establishments in America, where we need less dread the inundation of Barbarians, promise a superior stability and duration to the English language.

"Your use of the French tongue has also led you into a style more poetical and figurative, and more highly coloured, than our language seems to admit of in historical productions; for such is the practice of French writers, particularly the more recent ones, who illuminate their pictures more than custom will permit us. On the whole, your History, in my opinion, is written with spirit and judgment; and I exhort you very earnestly to continue it. The objections that occurred to me on reading it, were so frivolous, that I shall not trouble you with them, and should, I believe, have a difficulty to recollect them.

"I am, with great esteem,
"Sir,
"Your most obedient
"and most humble servant,
"David Hume.

"London,
"24th of Oct., 1767."

(Footnote by Lord Sheffield.)

Pope wrote in 1716: "They [the ancients] writ in languages that became universal and everlasting, while ours are extremely limited both in extent and duration. A mighty foundation for our pride! when the utmost we can hope is but to be read in one island, and to be thrown aside at the end of one age" (Warton's *Pope's Works*, ed., 1822, i., 64).

Hume lamented the need he was under of writing in English. In 1769 he wrote: "It has been my misfortune to write in the language of the most stupid and factious barbarians in the world" (*Letters to Strahan*, p. 113).

"We may reflect with some pleasure," wrote Gibbon, "that the English language will probably be diffused over an immense and populous continent" (*The Decline*, iv., 166).

31. WARBURTON'S HYPOTHESIS (p. 179).

"None but the initiated could reveal the secret of the mysteries; and the initiated could not reveal it without violating the laws as well of honour as of religion. I sincerely acquit the Bishop of Gloucester of any design; yet so unfortunate is his system, that it represents a most virtuous and elegant

poet as equally devoid of taste and of common honesty. . . . His lordship maintains that after the compliment of a formal apology,

'Sit mihi fas audita loqui' [vi., 266],

Virgil lays open the whole secret of the mysteries under the thin veil of an allegory, which could deceive none but the most careless readers. An apology! an allegory! Such artifices might perhaps have saved him from the sentence of the Areopagus, had some zealous or interested priest denounced him to the court, as guilty of publishing A Blasphemous Poem. But the laws of honour are more rigid, and yet more liberal, than those of civil tribunals. Sense, not words, is considered; and guilt is aggravated, not protected, by artful evasions. Virgil would still have incurred the severe censure of a contemporary, who was himself a man of very little religion.

'Vetabo qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgarit arcanæ, sub iisdem
Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum.'

Nor can I easily persuade myself that the ingenuous mind of Virgil could have deserved this excommunication" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 502).

There is an allusion in this passage which, though now obscure, would have been understood by every reader. Seven years earlier the Bishop had complained to the House of Lords of a breach of privilege by John Wilkes, in publishing a blasphemous and obscene poem with notes bearing the name of Dr. Warburton (*Parl. Hist.*, xv., 1346).

The quotation from Horace (*Odes*, iii., 2, 26) is rendered by Francis:—

"And they who mysteries reveal
Beneath my roof shall never live,
Shall never hoist with me the doubtful sail".

32. THE LITERARY CLUB (p. 189).

From the mixed, though polite, company of Boodle's, White's, and Brooks's, I must honourably distinguish a weekly society, which was instituted in the year 1764, and which still continues to flourish, under the title of the Literary Club (Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, p. 415; Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, p. 97 [Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 477; v., 109]). The names of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Mr. Topham Beauclerc, Mr. Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Colman, Sir William Jones, Dr. Percy, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Adam Smith, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Dunning, Sir Joseph Banks, Dr. Warton, and his brother, Mr. Thomas Warton, Dr. Burney, &c., form a large and luminous constellation of British stars. (Footnote by Gibbon.)

Boswell, whose luminosity was perhaps invisible to Gibbon, is passed over in this list. In a note in *The Tour to the Hebrides*, which Gibbon had read, he describes how Paley "shewed in decent but strong terms, the unfairness of the *indirect* attempts of modern infidels to unsettle and perplex religious principles, and particularly the irony, banter, and sneer of one whom he politely calls 'an eloquent historian'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, v., 203). In the *Life of Johnson* (iv., 73), also published in Gibbon's lifetime, Boswell writes: "Johnson certainly was vain of the society of ladies, and could make himself very agreeable to them, when he chose it; Sir Joshua Reynolds agreed with me that he could. Mr. Gibbon, with his usual sneer, controverted it, perhaps in resentment of Johnson's having talked with some disgust of his ugliness, which one would think a *philosopher* would not mind."

In the proof-sheet, after "Mr. Gibbon," Boswell had added, "the historical writer and to me offensive sneerer at what I hold sacred," but he struck it out. In the proof of the index was the entry, "Gibbon, the historian"; it was altered into "Gibbon, Edward, Esq.". So early as 1776 he showed his dislike of him. In that year he wrote to Temple: "I don't know but you have spoken too highly of Gibbon's book; the Dean of Derry, who is of our Club as well as Gibbon, talks of answering it. I think it is right that as fast as infidel wasps or venomous insects, whether creeping or flying, are hatched, they should be crushed. Murphy says he has read thirty pages of Smith's *Wealth*, but says he shall read no more: Smith too is now of our Club. It has lost its select merit." In 1779 Boswell wrote: "Gibbon is an ugly, affected, disgusting fellow, and poisons our literary club to me" (*Letters of Boswell*, pp. 232, 242). Gibbon was elected a member on March 4, 1774 (Croker's *Boswell*, ed. 1835, ii., 326). A year later, at one of the Club dinners, the talk fell on bears. "'We are told,' said Johnson, 'that the black bear is innocent; but I should not like to trust myself with him.' Mr. Gibbon muttered, in a low tone of voice, 'I should not like to trust myself with *you*'. This piece of sarcastic pleasantry was a prudent resolution, if applied to a competition of abilities" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 348).

Gibbon had at Lausanne an engraving, by Hall, of Reynolds's portrait of Johnson (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 479).

In the first three volumes (quarto) of *The Decline*, published in Johnson's lifetime, his name is only once mentioned. "Dr. Johnson affirms that *few* English words are of British extraction. Mr. Whitaker, who understands the British language, has discovered more than *three thousand*" (iv., 153). He is perhaps aimed at in vol. iii., p. 237, where the quotation from Claudian—

> "Nunquam libertas gratior exstat
> Quam sub rege pio"

is introduced as "the famous sentence so familiar to the friends of despotism". It was the motto to Johnson's *Political Tracts*, published in 1776. It was the motto also to Filmer's *Patriarcha*, and to Dryden's *History of the League*.

In the last half of *The Decline* Johnson is attacked in the following notes: "If the reader will turn to the first scene of the first part of Henry IV., he will see in the text of Shakespeare the natural feelings of enthusiasm; and in the notes of Dr. Johnson the workings of a bigoted, though vigorous, mind, greedy of every pretence to hate and persecute those who dissent from his creed" (vi., 266). Johnson's note (there is but one) is as follows: "The lawfulness and justice of the *holy wars* have been much disputed, but perhaps there is a principle on which the question may be easily determined. If it be part of the religion of the Mahometans to extirpate by the sword all other religions, it is, by the law of self-defence, lawful for men of every other religion, and for Christians among others, to make war upon Mahometans, simply as Mahometans, as men obliged by their own principles to make war upon Christians, and only lying in wait till opportunity shall promise them success."

In *The Rambler*, No. 122, Johnson says of English historians: "None of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit". On this Gibbon remarks: "In one of the *Ramblers*, Dr. Johnson praises Knolles as the first of historians, unhappy only in the choice of his subject. Yet I much doubt whether a partial and verbose compilation from Latin writers, thirteen hundred folio pages of speeches and battles, can either instruct or amuse an enlightened age, which requires from the historian some tincture of philosophy and criticism" (*The Decline*, vii., 24). For England's barrenness of historians when Johnson wrote see *ante*, p. 122. "All the

colouring, all the philosophy of history," he later on said, "is conjecture" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 365).

Gibbon, speaking of Mahomet II., says: "His menaces were expressed in the Oriental style, that the fugitives and deserters, had they the wings of a bird, should not escape from his inexorable justice". In a note he goes out of the way to attack "the extravagance of the rant" in a passage in Johnson's *Irene*, where "Mahomet's passion soars above sense and reason" (*The Decline*, vii., 187).

On the other hand, he quotes with approval four lines from the same play (*ib.*, vii., 171). See also *ib.*, vi., 243, for some words in a "sublime inscription" at which "a critique of high renown (the late Dr. Johnson) might cavil". I do not believe that Gibbon would have ventured to publish these notes when Johnson was living. He was one of those who signed the *Round Robin* to Johnson, that day at Reynolds's table, when "the question was who should have the courage to propose" to the Doctor the alterations in Goldsmith's epitaph (Boswell's *Johnson*, iii., 83).

He mentioned the Club to Garrick in a letter written from Paris on Aug. 14, 1777: "At this time of year the society of the Turk's-head can no longer be addressed as a corporate body, and most of the individual members are probably dispersed: Adam Smith in Scotland; Burke in the shades of Beaconsfield; Fox, the Lord or the devil knows where, &c. Be so good as to salute in my name those friends who may fall in your way. Assure Sir Joshua, in particular, that I have not lost my relish for *manly* conversation and the society of the brown table" (*Garrick Corres.*, ii., 256).

Tennyson, who was elected a member of the club in 1865, was told by the Duke of Argyll that "the form of intimation was drawn up as a joke by Gibbon, and has been adhered to ever since". It is as follows: "I have to intimate to you that you have had the honour of being elected a member of 'The Club'". Tennyson had written previously that he had never heard of "The Club" (*Life of Tennyson*, ii., 20). For the elections of Macaulay and Grote see *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, i., 229.

If Gibbon in this jocular intimation described the club as "The Club," we find him in the above note calling it "The Literary Club," as Boswell also often called it (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 477; iv., 326; v., 109, *n.* 5).

Gibbon described "authors, managers, &c.," as "good company to know, but not to live with" (*Corres.*, i., 201).

33. LISKEARD (p. 191).

Gibbon was elected member for Liskeard in the autumn of 1774. He had visited Eliot at Port Eliot in Sept., 1773. "Our civil landlord," he wrote, "possesses neither a pack of hounds, nor a stable of running horses, nor a large farm, nor a good library" (*Corres.*, i., 194). Miss Burney, in 1781, described Eliot as "a most agreeable, lively, and very clever man" (Mme. D'Arblay's *Diary*, ed. 1842, ii., 13).

Jeremy Bentham wrote in August, 1781: "Eliot is knight of the shire [member of parliament for the county], and puts in seven borough members for Cornwall" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 97).

Liskeard, or Leskeard as it was often written, was distinguished by many eminent representatives—Sir Edward Coke in the seventeenth century; Gibbon in the eighteenth; William Huskisson, Charles Buller, Bernal Osborne, Edward Horsman ("the superior person of the House of Commons"), and Leonard H. Courtney. Philip Stanhope, to whom Lord Chesterfield wrote his *Letters*, was member from 1754 to 1761. "Mr. Eliot," Chesterfield wrote (*Letters*, iv., 58), "has, in the most friendly manner imaginable, fixed you at his own borough of Liskeard, where you will be elected, jointly with him, without the least opposition or difficulty." Eliot,

however, was elected at St. Germains. From 1768 to 1784 Samuel Salt was one of the members, that old Bencher of the Inner Temple "of pensive gentility," who lives in the *Essays of Elia*. He must have been accounted worthy even of Liskeard, for "it was incredible what repute for talents he enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity".

By the last Reform Bill this interesting borough was lost in one of the county divisions of Cornwall. It surely, and not Bodmin, should have given the name to the district. Who cares for Bodmin? For an account of this ancient borough, see W. P. Courtney's *Parliamentary Representatives of Cornwall to* 1832, p. 251.

34. GIBBON'S "SILENT AND SINCERE VOTES" (p. 191).

We may well be astonished at the word "perhaps" in the text, when these "silent and sincere votes" helped to set England at war, not only with her thirteen colonies, but also with the three chief naval powers of the Continent of Europe—France, Spain, and Holland.

According to Gibbon's own estimate (*The Decline*, i., 42) it was a struggle between eight millions of people on one side and thirty-two millions on the other side. There were certainly more than 8,000,000 in the British Isles. In 1801 there were nearly 11,000,000 in Great Britain alone (*Penny Cyclo.*, xi., 414). The population of the other countries was probably under-estimated also, so that the disproportion of the opposing powers may be correctly given. Moreover, the eight millions were not united. Ireland was disaffected—Protestants as well as Catholics—and in 1779 a rebellion was on the point of breaking out. So incredibly weak was the Government that for some days in June, 1780, London was scared by a mob which burnt down the very prisons. Of the Ministry Johnson said, "such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 139). He was one of the least despondent of men so far as the outside world was concerned. Nevertheless, on Aug. 4, 1782, he wrote: "Perhaps no nation not absolutely conquered has declined so much in so short a time. We seem to be sinking" (*Letters of Johnson*, ii., 264). On Jan. 21, 1783, he wrote: "I am afraid of a civil war" (*ib.*, p. 286). The National Debt was raised by the war from 129 to 268 millions (*Penny Cyclo.*, xvi., 100). At present it amounts to £15 a head (Whitaker's *Almanack*, 1899, p. 185). In these few years of warfare, taking Gibbon's estimate of population as correct, it was increased by £16 a head.

He might have learnt wisdom from his friend David Hume, who wrote on Oct. 26, 1775: "Arbitrary power can extend its oppressive arm to the Antipodes; but a limited government can never long be upheld at a distance, even where no disgusts have intervened; much less where such violent animosities have taken place. We must therefore annul all the charters; abolish every democratical power in every colony; repeal the Habeas Corpus Act with regard to them; invest every governor with full discretionary or arbitrary powers; confiscate the estates of all the chief planters, and hang three-fourths of their clergy. To execute such acts of destructive violence twenty thousand men will not be sufficient; nor thirty thousand to maintain them, in so wide and disjointed a territory. And who are to pay so great an army? The Colonists cannot at any time, much less after reducing them to such a state of desolation: we ought not, and indeed cannot, in the overloaded, or rather overwhelmed and totally ruined state of our finances. Let us therefore lay aside all anger, shake hands and part friends. Or, if we retain any anger, let it only be against ourselves for our past folly; and against that wicked madman, Pitt, who has reduced us to our present condition. Dixi" (*Letters of Hume to Strahan*, p. 289).

On April 25, 1781, Horace Walpole wrote (*Letters*, viii., 30): "Unfortunately Dr. Franklin was a truer politician, when he said he would furnish Mr.

Gibbon with materials for writing the History of the Decline of the British Empire".

The younger Pitt on June 12, 1781, described the war as "most accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical" (Stanhope's *Pitt*, ed. 1861, i., 61).

In *The Decline*, vi., 408, Gibbon wrote justly of war: "In the miserable account of war the gain is never equivalent to the loss, the pleasure to the pain". In another passage, in which he describes the seven appearances of a comet at intervals of 575 years, he perhaps shows how little he foresaw the rapid advance of America. "At the eighth period, in the year 2255, their calculations may perhaps be verified by the astronomers of some future capital in the Siberian or American wilderness" (*ib.*, iv., 434). See *post*, p. 324, for doubts cast on Gibbon's sincerity.

35. THE PUBLICATION OF THE DECLINE AND FALL (p. 195).

The book was published on Feb. 17, 1776 (*Corres.*, i., 279). "The volume," Gibbon wrote, "a handsome quarto, costs one guinea unbound; it sold, according to the expression of the publisher, like a threepenny pamphlet on the affairs of the day" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 387). The day after publication Horace Walpole wrote (*Letters*, vi., 310): "Lo, there is just appeared a truly classic work; a history, not majestic like Livy, nor compressed like Tacitus; not stamped with character like Clarendon; perhaps not so deep as Robertson's *Scotland*, but a thousand degrees above his *Charles;* not pointed like Voltaire, but as accurate as he is inexact; modest as he is *tranchant*, and sly as Montesquieu, without being so *recherché*. The style is as smooth as a Flemish picture, and the muscles are concealed and only for natural uses, not exaggerated like Michael Angelo's to show the painter's skill in anatomy; nor composed of the limbs of clowns of different nations like Dr. Johnson's heterogeneous monsters."

By March 26 1,000 copies were sold. Of the second edition of 1,500 copies, published on June 3, 700 were gone by June 6. In March, 1777, a third edition, also in quarto, of 1,000 copies, was printing (*Corres.*, i., 280, 285, 304). The estimated profit on this edition was £490, of which Gibbon's two-third share was £326 13s. 4d. (*Misc. Works*, ii., 167). The second half of the book would be worth, he estimated, £3,000 (*Corres.*, ii., 126). I infer that it produced £4,000; for Lord Sheffield, in publishing Gibbon's letter, changed £3,000 into "about £4,000" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 377).

For the copyright of Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works* John Murray, in 1812, paid Lord Sheffield, as the historian's executor, £1,000 (*Memoirs of John Murray*, i., 236).

36. OSSIAN (p. 197).

"Something of a doubtful mist still hangs over these Highland traditions, nor can it be entirely dispelled by the most ingenious researches of modern criticism" (*The Decline*, i., 128).

"Ossian, the son of Fingal, is *said* to have disputed in his extreme old age with one of the foreign missionaries, and the dispute is still extant in verse, and in the Erse language. See Mr. Macpherson's *Dissertations on the Antiquity of Ossian's Poems*, p. 10" (*ib.*, ii., 64).

In spite of Hume's warning, we find Gibbon writing in a later volume: "In the dark and doubtful paths of Caledonian antiquity I have chosen for my guides two learned and ingenious Highlanders". One of the two was James Macpherson, to whose *History of Great Britain* he refers (*ib.*, iii., 40).

Ossian Gibbon describes as "a conjectural supplement to the Erse poetry' (*ib.*, p. 43). In the text he speaks of "the generous humanity which seems to inspire the songs of Ossian" (*ib.*, p. 44). In vi., 230, he seems to sneer at Ossian, where, after quoting a bombastic translation from Dow's *History of Hindostan*, he adds: "I suspect that by some odd fatality the style of Ferishta has been improved by that of Ossian".

It is not impossible that Gibbon wished to keep well with Macpherson, who, if we can trust what Horace Walpole wrote in February, 1776, "had a pension of £600 a year from the Court to supervise the newspapers". In 1781 this pension was £800 (*Journal of the Reign of George III.*, ii., 17, 483; see also *The Rolliad and Probationary Odes*, ed. 1799, p. 458).

Hume at first believed in the poems of Ossian; though after "often hearing them totally rejected with disdain and indignation, as a palpable and most impudent forgery," by many of "the men of letters in London," he too rejected them (*Letters to Strahan*, pp. 35-38). A year before Gibbon quoted *Ossian*, Johnson, in his *Journey to the Western Islands*, had exposed the fraud. "If we know little of the ancient Highlanders," he wrote, "let us not fill the vacuity with Ossian. If we have not searched the Magellanick regions, let us, however, forbear to people them with Patagons" (Johnson's *Works*, ix., 116; see also Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 297-303, 309; iv., 183).

37. FRENCH SOCIETY (p. 199).

Gibbon wrote from Paris in 1763: "We may say what we please of the frivolity of the French, but I do assure you that in a fortnight passed at Paris I have heard more conversation worth remembering, and seen more men of letters among the people of fashion, than I had done in two or three winters in London" (*Corres.*, i., 29).

Johnson, who spent some weeks in Paris in the autumn of 1775, but who was only "just beginning to creep into acquaintance" when he left, said on April 9, 1778, at Reynolds's table, in Gibbon's presence: "I question if in Paris such a company as is sitting round this table could be got together in less than half a year" (Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 401; iii., 253).

Miss Edgeworth, who, in more than one visit to Paris, had seen some of the best French society, wrote in 1822: "The great variety of society in London, and the solidity of the sense and information to be gathered from conversation, strike me as far superior to Parisian society" (*Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth*, ii., 77).

Mme. du Deffand thus described Gibbon on May 27, 1777: "Je lui crois beaucoup d'esprit, sa conversation est facile, et *forte de choses*, comme disait Fontenelle". After reading some of the translation of *The Decline*, she continued: "Je trouve l'auteur assez aimable, mais il a, si je ne me trompe, une grande ambition de célébrité, il brigue à force ouverte la faveur de nos beaux esprits, et il me paraît qu'il se trompe souvent aux jugemens qu'il en porte; dans la conversation il veut briller et prendre le ton qu'il croit le nôtre, et il y réussit assez bien". On Sept. 21 she wrote: "M. Gibbon a ici le plus grand succès, on se l'arrache, il se conduit très bien, et sans avoir, je crois, autant d'esprit que feu M. Hume, il ne tombe pas dans les mêmes ridicules. . . . Il se comporte avec tout le monde d'une manière qui ne donne point de prise aux ridicules; ce qui est fort difficile à éviter dans les sociétés qu'il fréquente." On Oct. 26 she added: "Il fait trop de cas de nos agrémens, trop de désir de les acquérir; j'ai toujours eu sur le bout de la langue de lui dire: ne vous tourmentez pas, vous méritez l'honneur d'être Français" (*Lettres de La Marquise du Deffand à Monsieur Walpole*, London, 1810, iii., 265, 287, 295, 301).

38. L'ABBÉ DE MABLY (p. 199).

(I.)

Of the voluminous writings of the Abbé de Mably (see his Eloge by the Abbé Brizard), the *Principes du droit public de l'Europe*, and the first part of the *Observations sur l'Histoire de France*, may be deservedly praised; and even the *Manière d'écrire l'Histoire* contains several useful precepts and judicious remarks. Mably was a lover of virtue and freedom; but his virtue was austere, and his freedom was impatient of an equal. Kings, magistrates, nobles, and successful writers were the objects of his contempt, or hatred, or envy; but his illiberal abuse of Voltaire, Hume, Buffon, the Abbé Raynal, Dr. Robertson, and *tutti quanti* can be injurious only to himself (Footnote by Gibbon).

Gibbon praises him in *The Decline*: "The brilliant imagination of Montesquieu is corrected by the dry cold reason of the Abbé de Mably" (i., 227). "His accurate distinction of *times* gives him a merit to which even Montesquieu is a stranger" (*ib.*, iv., 131). In an early Essay entitled *Du Gouvernement Féodal*, he says of these two writers: "Ces hommes célèbres ont ouvert la carrière; je les suis en tremblant" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 183). A little later he wrote of Mably that he "had never been able to discover in his works anything but common-place" (*ib.*, v., 406). To Dr. Robertson he wrote in 1783: "The Abbé appears to hate, and affects to despise every writer of his own times who has been well received by the public" (Stewart's *Robertson*, p. 365; see also *ante*, p. 224, *n.*).

Voltaire was described by him as "un homme qui ne voyait pas au bout de son nez" (*Mémoires, &c., de Grimm*, v., 412).

(II.)

"Est-il rien de plus fastidieux (says the polite Censor) qu'un M. *Guibbon*, qui, dans son éternelle Histoire des Empereurs Romains, suspend à chaque instant son insipide et lente narration, pour vous expliquer la cause [les causes] des faits que vous allez lire?" (*Manière d'écrire l'Histoire*, p. 184; see another passage, p. 280.) Yet I am indebted to the Abbé de Mably for two such advocates as the Anonymous French Critic and my friend Mr. Hayley (Hayley's *Works*, 8vo edit., vol. ii., pp. 261-263) (Footnote by Gibbon).

The "other passage" is as follows: "Vous voyez des historiens, par exemple M. Guibbon, qui s'empêtrent dans leur sujet, ne savent ni l'entamer ni le finir, et tournent, pour ainsi dire, toujours sur eux-mêmes".

For Hayley see *ante*, pp. 180, 230. Gibbon was to have a far greater advocate than this poetaster. Sainte-Beuve thus concludes his criticism of the *Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature* (*ante*, p. 127): "En un mot on trouve partout dans cet *Essai* l'avant-goût de cet esprit de critique qui sera tout l'opposé de la méthode roide et tranchante d'un Mably" (*Causeries*, viii., 448).

39. GIBBON'S ANTAGONISTS—DAVIES, CHELSUM, WATSON, APTHORPE, TAYLOR, MILNER, PRIESTLEY, AND WHITE (p. 202).

(*a*) Henry Edward Davies.

He published in 1778, *An Examination of the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of Mr. Gibbon's History of the Decline, &c., in which his View of the progress of the Christian religion is shewn to be founded on the misrepresentation of the authors he cites, and . . . instances of his inaccuracy and plagiarism are produced.* Davies was only one-and-twenty when he attacked Gibbon. He became Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, and died in 1784. Of the

"royal pension" which Gibbon "enjoyed the pleasure of giving to him," I am informed that "no trace can be found in spite of an exhaustive research in the Treasury Records".

(*b*) Dr. James Chelsum.

He published in 1776 *Remarks on the two last chapters of Mr. Gibbon's History*, &c. "Dr. Chelsum," Gibbon wrote, "is unwilling that the world should forget that *he* was the first who sounded to arms, that *he* was the first who furnished the antidote to the poison" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 602). If "poor Chelsum was neglected," nevertheless he had a fair share of the good things of the Church. According to the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, he held three benefices in as many counties, and, moreover, was chaplain to two Bishops and was one of the Preachers at Whitehall.

(*c*) Dr. Richard Watson.

He published in 1776 *An Apology for Christianity in a Series of Letters to Edward Gibbon, Esq.* In 1782 he was made Bishop of Llandaff on the recommendation of Lord Shelburne, "who (writes Watson) had erroneously entertained the opinion that I was a warm, and might become an useful partisan" (*Life of Watson*, ed. 1818, i., 153). "My answer to Gibbon," he says, "had a great run" (*ib.*, p. 98). Gibbon described it as "civil, but too dull to deserve notice" (*Corres.*, i., 295). For Watson's friendly correspondence with him see *Misc. Works*, ii., 180, 227. In *The Decline*, vi., 10, the Bishop's *Chemical Essays* are styled "a classic book". For his neglect of his diocese, see *John. Misc.*, ii., 199.

Not only Davies, but also his allies in this attack, "the two confederate Doctors," Chelsum and Randolph, were of Oxford. "Oppressed with the same yoke, covered with the same trappings, they heavily move along, perhaps not with an equal pace, in the same beaten track of prejudice and preferment" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 603). To Oxford also belonged Dr. White. This, no doubt, increased Gibbon's dislike of that university. Watson belonged to Cambridge. "There is much less difference," Gibbon wrote, "between the smoothness of the Ionic and the roughness of the Doric dialect than may be found between the polished style of Dr. Watson and the coarse language of Mr. Davies, Dr. Chelsum, or Dr. Randolph" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 602).

(*d*) Dr. East Apthorpe.

He was the son of a merchant of Boston, Massachusetts, and was Vicar of Croydon. "Early in 1778 he published *Letters on the Prevalence of Christianity before its Civil Establishment; with Observations on the late History of the Decline of the Roman Empire.* In February of the same year he was collated by Archbishop Cornwallis to the rectory of St. Mary-le-Bow" (Nichols's *Lit. Anec.*, iii., 94; see *Misc. Works*, iv., 596).

(*e*) Henry Taylor.

The stupendous title, *Thoughts on the Causes of the Grand Apostacy*, at first agitated my nerves, till I discovered that it was the apostacy of the whole church, since the Council of Nice, from Mr. Taylor's private religion. His book is a thorough mixture of *high* enthusiasm and *low* buffoonery, and the Millennium is a fundamental article of his creed (Footnote by Gibbon).

He was Rector of Crawley and Vicar of Portsmouth. In 1781 he published *Thoughts on the Causes of the Grand Apostacy, with Reflections and Observations on the XVth Chapter of Mr. Gibbon's History*, &c.

(*f*) Joseph Milner.

From his grammar school at Kingston-upon-Hull, Mr. Joseph Milner pronounces an anathema against all rational religion. *His* faith is a divine taste, a spiritual inspiration; *his* church is a mystic and invisible body; the *natural* Christians, such as Mr. Locke, who believe and interpret the Scriptures, are, in his judgment, no better than profane infidels (Footnote by Gibbon).

He published in 1781 *Gibbon's Account of Christianity considered; together with some Strictures on Hume's Dialogues concerning Natural Religion.* "On the margin of the passage in Milner's *History of the Church*, where Basil says of Gregory Thaumaturgus (in whose miraculous powers Milner devoutly believed), 'He never allowed himself to call his Brother fool,' Macaulay wrote, 'He never knew such a fool as Milner then'" (Trevelyan's *Macaulay*, ed. 1877, ii., 285).

(*g*) Dr. Joseph Priestley.

He published in 1782 *An History of the Corruptions of Christianity.* In Part I. of the General Conclusion "he threw down his gauntlet" to Gibbon, and in Part II. to Hurd (*ante*, pp. 178, 203). Gibbon thus refers to the book in *The Decline*, vi., 128: "I shall recommend to public animadversion two passages in Dr. Priestley, which betray the ultimate tendency of his opinions. At the first of these (*Hist. of the Corruptions of Christianity*, vol. i., pp. 275, 276) the priest, at the second (vol. ii., p. 484) the magistrate, may tremble!"

In the first passage Priestley says: "Great buildings do not often fall at once, but some apartments will still be thought habitable after the rest are seen to be in ruins. It is the same with great *systems of doctrine*, the parts of which have long gone together. The force of evidence obliges us at first to abandon some *one* part of them only, and we do not immediately see that, in consequence of this, we ought to abandon others, and at length the *whole*. . . . The detection of one falsehood prepares us for the detection of another, till, before we are aware of it, we find no trace left of the immense and seemingly well-compacted system." With all this Gibbon must have agreed.

In the second passage Priestley says: "It is nothing but the *alliance* of the Kingdom of Christ with the kingdoms of this world (an alliance which our Lord himself expressly disclaimed) that supports the grossest corruptions of Christianity; and perhaps we must wait for the fall of the civil powers before this most unnatural alliance be broken. . . . May the *Kingdom of God* and of Christ (that which I conceive to be intended in the Lord's prayer) truly and fully *come*, though all the kingdoms of the world be removed, in order to make way for it."

For the letter in which Gibbon "declined his challenge" see *Misc. Works*, ii., 265. Priestley wrote in his reply: "If there be any certain method of discovering a man's real object, yours has been to discredit Christianity in fact, while in words you represent yourself as a friend to it; a conduct which I scruple not to call highly unworthy and mean; an insult on the common sense of the Christian world" (*ib.*, p. 267).

Such a passage as the following justifies Priestley's accusation: "Some deities of a more recent and fashionable cast might soon have occupied the deserted temples of Jupiter and Apollo, if, in the decisive moment, the wisdom of Providence had not interposed a genuine revelation, fitted to inspire the most rational esteem and conviction, whilst, at the same time, it was adorned with all that could attract the curiosity, the wonder, and the veneration of the people" (*The Decline*, ii., 56).

So far was he from "fearing" Gibbon, that he wished to publish the letters that had passed between them, but was forbidden by him, as it was "private correspondence, which a man of honour is not at liberty to print". He printed it soon after the historian's death (Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, ii., 265, 271).

Three years after this attack on Priestley in *The Decline and Fall*, the magistrates of Birmingham went to sleep, while a Church and King mob burnt down his house and chapel, as well as another chapel and the houses of many of his friends. The magistrates did not wake up till the mob "expanded their views," and began to plunder indiscriminately (*Life of Priestley*, ed. 1810, p. 83; *Life of Sir Rowland Hill*, i., 32).

(*h*) Dr. Joseph White.

He was at this time Professor of Arabic at Oxford. Later on he was given in addition the chair of Hebrew and a canonry at Christ Church. In 1784 he delivered the Bampton Lectures, taking for his subject, "*A Comparison of Mahometism and Christianity, in their History, their Evidence, and their Effects*. "These lectures," writes Dr. John Johnstone, "became part of the triumphant literature of the University of Oxford". Of them Dr. Parr had written about one-fifth part. Writing to Parr about a passage in the manuscript of the last lecture, White said: "I fear I did not clearly explain myself; I humbly beg the favour of you to make my meaning more intelligible". On the death of the Rev. Samuel Badcock in 1788, a note for £500 from White was found in his pocket-book. White pretended that this was remuneration for some other work; but it was believed on good grounds that Badcock had begun what Parr had completed, and that these famous *Lectures* were mainly their work. Badcock was one of the writers in the *Monthly Review*.

On May 13, 1784, White wrote to Parr: "The fame of the *Lectures* increases daily; they give equal satisfaction to the beaux and the belles and the Doctors. The Church is crowded in the most extraordinary manner" (Johnstone's *Life of Parr*, i., 220-1, 230, 241, 251; see also *ib.*, p. 251, and Lowndes's *Bibl. Man.*, ed. 1871, p. 2901, for an account of a meeting held at Parr's parsonage to ascertain his share in the *Lectures*).

The passage in White's letter to Badcock, not quite accurately quoted *ante*, p. 204, is as follows: "The part where we encounter Gibbon ought to be brilliant, and the conclusion of the whole must be animated and grand" (Johnstone's *Parr*, i., 248).

In 1790 he pubished *A Statement of Dr. White's Literary Obligations to the late Rev. Mr. Samuel Badcock and the Rev. Samuel Parr, LL.D.* For his explanation of the note for £500 see *ib.*, p. 64.

It is in *The Decline*, vi., 15, that Gibbon praises White: "Perhaps the interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools at Oxford, and her pupils might demonstrate to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet". Gibbon adds in a note: "Yet I sincerely doubt whether the Oxford mosque would have produced a volume of controversy so elegant and ingenious as the sermons lately preached by Mr. White, the Arabic Professor, at Mr. Bampton's lecture. His observations on the character and religion of Mahomet are always adapted to his argument, and generally founded in truth and reason. He sustains the part of a lively and eloquent advocate; and sometimes rises to the merit of an historian and philosopher."

In spite of his borrowed plumes, White was a man of real learning (Johnstone's *Life of Parr*, i., 268).

Macaulay recorded in Oct. 9, 1850: "I picked up Whitaker's criticism on Gibbon. Pointless spite, with here and there a just remark. . . . How utterly all the attacks on his History are forgotten! this of Whitaker; Randolph's; Chelsum's; Davies's; that stupid beast Joseph Milner's; even Watson's. And still the book, with all its great faults of substance and style, retains, and will retain, its place in our literature, and this though it is offensive to the religious feeling of the country, and really most unfair where religion is concerned. But Whitaker was as dirty a cur as I remember" (Macaulay's *Life*, ed. 1877, ii., 285; for Whitaker, see *Misc. Works*, i., 243, *n.*,

and Nichols's *Lit. Anec.*, iii., 102, where it is impudently asserted that Gibbon "submitted the MS. of the first volume of *The Decline*, &c., to his inspection, but suppressed the chapter obnoxious to the Christian world, overawed by his high character").

40. GIBBON'S VINDICATION (p. 202).

The full title of the work is *A Vindication of Some Passages in the XVth and XVIth Chapters of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* By the Author. London, 1779. 8vo (*Misc. Works*, iv., 415).

Horace Walpole wrote on Jan. 14, 1779 (*Letters*, vii., 165): "There is, in sooth, a charming novelty to-day of a very different kind; an answer from Mr. Gibbon to the monks that have attacked his two famous chapters. It is the quintessence of argument, wit, temper, spirit, and consequently of victory. I did not expect anything so luminous in this age of Egyptian darkness—nor the monks either." He had written to Gibbon somewhat earlier: "Davies and his prototypes tell you Middleton, &c., have used the same objections, and they have been *confuted; answering*, in the theologic dictionary, signifying *confuting*" (*ib.*, vii., 158). Walpole probably remembered Dryden, who at the end of his *Controversy with Stillingfleet*, wrote: "Everything which is called an answer is with them a confutation" (Dryden's *Works*, ed. 1892, xvii., 253).

Mackintosh (*Life*, i., 245) "considered the sixteenth chapter as a very ingenious and specious, but very disgraceful extenuation of the cruelties perpetrated by the Roman magistrates against the Christians. It is written in the most contemptibly factious spirit of prejudice against the sufferers." Gibbon had tried in his *Vindication* to meet this charge by saying that as there is no "Heathen narrative of the persecutions of Decius and Diocletian," he had constituted himself "counsel for the prisoner, who is incapable of making any defence for himself" (*Misc. Works*, iv., 626).

In another passage, after stating that his accusers "convert a geographical observation into a theological error," he continues: "When I recollect that the imputation of a similar error was employed by the implacable Calvin to precipitate and to justify the execution of Servetus, I must applaud the felicity of this country and of this age, which has disarmed, if it could not mollify, the fierceness of ecclesiastial criticism" (*ib.*, iv., 539).

For the reasons why he was "more deeply scandalised at the single execution of Servetus than at the hecatombs which have blazed in the Auto da Fés of Spain and Portugal" see *The Decline*, vi., 127.

By his conversion to Rome Gibbon had already been guilty of high treason (*ante*, p. 73). By his *Decline and Fall* he laid himself open to prosecution under the Statute 9 and 10, William III., c. 22, which enacts that "if any person educated in the Christian religion shall by writing, &c., deny the Christian religion to be true he shall . . . for the second offence . . . suffer three years' imprisonment without bail" (Blackstone's *Comment.*, ed. 1775, iv., 44). See also *ante*, p. 291.

Whiston (*Memoirs*, p. 226) records that in 1714, at the Stafford Assizes, he heard Baron Price "exhorting the Grand Jury to present all such as blasphemed or condemned the Church's doctrine of the Trinity. The High Sheriff," Whiston continues, "afterwards told the Baron that I was in Court, and should naturally suppose this part of his charge levelled against me in particular. The Baron replied that he meant no such thing; that it was only his usual form; nay, that I was the honestest man in the world, and that he was then reading my works."

41. BISHOP HORSLEY (p. 203).

Samuel Horsley was Bishop, first of St. David's, and next of Rochester. He published *Tracts in Controversy with Dr. Priestley upon the Historical Question of the Belief of the First Ages in Our Lord's Divinity*. Priestley, who complains of the rudeness of the attack, replied "in four volumes octavo. This work," he adds, "has brought me more antagonists, and I now write a pamphlet annually in defence of the Unitarian doctrine against all my opponents" (*Memoirs of Priestley*, ed. 1810, p. 70).

Windham, in his *Diary*, p. 125, speaks of Horsley as having his thoughts "intent wholly on prospects of Church preferment". Bentham (*Works*, x., 41) says: "I have heard Wilberforce call him 'a dirty rascal' and 'a dirty scoundrel'".

Lord Holland (*Memoirs*, &c., ii., 90) describes Horsley as "a man of coarse and vulgar manners, hot temper, and imprudent conduct; . . . but distinguished for ready and powerful eloquence, a bold spirit, and a strong mind". According to Lord Campbell (*Lives of the Chancellors*, ed. 1846, v., 635) Thurlow rewarded him for his *Letters to Priestley* by a stall at Gloucester, "saying that 'those who supported the Church should be supported by it'".

Just as Gibbon boasted that attacks on him by the clergy were rewarded in this world, so was it said of Priestley that "to dispute with him was deemed the road to preferment. He had already made two Bishops, and there were still several heads which wanted mitres, and others who cast a more humble eye upon tithes and glebe lands" (*Life of William Hutton*, ed. 1816, p. 161).

42. BURKE'S PLAN OF ECONOMICAL REFORMATION (p. 207).

I can never forget the delight with which that diffusive and ingenious orator, Mr. Burke, was heard by all sides of the house, and even by those whose existence he proscribed. (See Mr. Burke's Speech on the Bill of Reform, pp. 72-80 [Burke's *Works*, ed. 1808, iii., 322-334].) The Lords of Trade blushed at their insignificancy, and Mr. Eden's appeal to the 2,500 volumes of our Reports, served only to excite a general laugh. I take this opportunity of certifying the correctness of Mr. Burke's printed speeches, which I have heard and read (Footnote by Gibbon).

Burke on Feb. 11, 1780, submitted to Parliament "a plan for the . . . economical reformation of the civil and other establishments". The passage quoted in the text is found in Burke's *Works*, ed. 1808, iii., 332. On Feb. 23 he brought in his Bill to effect this reformation (*Parl. Hist.*, xxi., 111). On March 13, in answer to Mr. Eden, he said that "his 2,300 volumes would serve as a monument under which both he and his clause might be buried, and form a funeral pile for them as large as the pyramids of Egypt". Eden had instanced the illustrious writers who had sat at the Board—Locke, Addison, and Prior. Burke replied that "considered as an Academy of Belles Lettres, he was willing to bow his head to the great and shining talents of its several members. Every department of literature had its separate Professor. The historian's labours, the wise and salutary result of deep religious research [Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*], &c." (*ib.*, pp. 235-8). On March 13, the Lords of Trade were in vain "urged to withdraw before the division, on the ground of indecency in their voting on a question in which they were so personally concerned" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1780, i., 145). Pitt, not yet in Parliament, witnessed from the gallery "a scene which (he writes) I never saw before, a majority against a Minister" (Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 38).

"The storm blew over" owing to the illness of the Speaker, which kept

the House from meeting for ten days. During this recess "effectual means were used to bring the numerous deserters from the Court back to their original standard". On April 24 the Ministers had a majority of 51. In a scene of "shameful disorder," Fox "declared the vote of that night to be scandalous, disgraceful, and treacherous. The defection," he added, "originated chiefly among the county members" (*Parl. Hist.*, xxi., 523-6; *Ann. Reg.*, 1780, i., 181).

On March 8 the clause for abolishing the office of Third Secretary of State, or Secretary of State for the Colonies, was lost by 201 to 208 (*Parl. Hist.*, xxi., 193, 217). The office was abolished at the Peace of 1782, but restored in 1794 (Stanhope's *Pitt*, ed. 1861, ii., 242). "Our late president" was Lord George Germain, who was appointed in 1775, and held the office till 1779 (*Dict. of Nat. Biog.*). In Nov., 1775, he was also made Secretary of State for America (Walpole's *Letters*, vi., 280), which office he held till March, 1782.

43. GIBBON'S ACCEPTANCE OF A PLACE (p. 207).

"*From* Edward Gibbon, Esq., *to* Edward Elliot, Esq., of Port Elliot.

"July 2, 1779.

"Dear Sir,

"Yesterday I received a very interesting communication from my friend the Attorney-General [Wedderburne], whose kind and honourable behaviour towards me I must always remember with the highest gratitude. He informed me that, in consequence of an arrangement, a place at the Board of Trade was reserved for me, and that as soon as I signified my acceptance of it, he was satisfied no farther difficulties would arise. My answer to him was sincere and explicit. I told him that I was far from approving all the past measures of the administration, even some of those in which I myself had silently concurred; that I saw, with the rest of the world, many capital defects in the characters of some of the present ministers, and was sorry that in so alarming a situation of public affairs, the country had not the assistance of several able and honest men who are now in opposition. But that I had not formed with any of those persons in opposition any engagements or connections which could in the least restrain or affect my parliamentary conduct: that I could not discover among them such superior advantages, either of measures or of abilities, as could make me consider it as a duty to attach myself to their cause; and that I clearly understood, from the public and private language of one of their leaders (Charles Fox), that in the actual state of the country, he himself was seriously of opinion that opposition could not tend to any good purpose, and might be productive of much mischief; that, for those reasons, I saw no objections which could prevent me from accepting an office under the present government, and that I was ready to take a step which I found to be consistent both with my interest and my honour.

"It must now be decided, whether I may continue to live in England, or whether I must soon withdraw myself into a kind of philosophical exile in Switzerland. My father left his affairs in a state of embarrassment, and even of distress. My attempts to dispose of a part of my landed property have hitherto been disappointed, and are not likely at present to be more successful; and my plan of expense, though moderate in itself, deserves the name of extravagance, since it exceeds my real income. The addition of the salary which is now offered will make my situation perfectly easy; but I hope you will do me the justice to believe that my mind could not be so, unless I were satisfied of the rectitude of my own conduct" (Footnote by Lord Sheffield).

The following extracts from Gibbon's Letters show his opinion of the ministry:—

"(Oct. 31, 1775.) We have a warm parliament, but an indolent cabinet" (*Corres.*, i., 272).

"(Jan. 29, 1776.) I much fear that our leaders have not a genius which can act at the distance of 3,000 miles" (*ib.*, p. 278).

"(Aug. 11, 1777.) What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it in America! . . . Upon the whole, I find it much easier to defend the justice than the policy of our measures, but there are certain cases where whatever is repugnant to sound policy ceases to be just" (*ib.*, p. 316).

"(Dec. 16, 1777.) I shall scarcely give my consent to exhaust still further the finest country in the world, in the prosecution of a war from whence no reasonable man entertains any hopes of success" (*ib.*, p. 325).

"(Feb. 28, 1778.) I still repeat that in my opinion Lord N. [North] does not deserve pardon for the past, applause for the present, or confidence for the future" (*ib.*, p. 331).

"(Dec. 6, 1781.) The present state of public affairs is indeed deplorable, and I fear *hopeless*" (*ib.*, ii., 10).

Lord Sheffield, defending his friend, says that "although Mr. Gibbon was not perfectly satisfied with *every* measure, yet he uniformly supported all the *principal ones* regarding the American war. . . . He liked the brilliant society of a Club, the most distinguished members of which were notorious for their opposition to Government, and might be led, in some degree, to join in their language" (Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, i., 236). Unfortunately very few division lists are preserved. I find, however, that on Feb. 2, 1778, he voted for Fox's motion "that no more of the Old Corps be sent out of the Kingdom". Had it been carried, new levies only could have been sent to America (*Parl. Hist.*, xix., 684).

G. Hardinge wrote to Horace Walpole (n. d.): "Amongst the books of Charles Fox carried off by the indiscriminate hands of the law, and sold under an execution, was an odd volume of Gibbon's *History of the Roman Empire*. It sold for three guineas, more in honour to this manuscript in the first leaf than to the work:—

"'I received this work from the Author (on such a day).—N.B. I heard him declare at Brook's, the day after the Rescript of Spain was notified, that nothing could save this country but *six heads* (of certain Ministers whom he named) upon the table. In fourteen days after this anathema he became *a Lord of Trade;* and has ever since talked *out* of the House, as he has voted *in* it, the advocate and champion of those Ministers. Charles Fox'" (Nichols's *Lit. Hist.*, iii., 213).

Wilberforce in 1796 recorded the following: "'There are two ways,' said Eliot, 'of telling a story. Gibbon was charged with having said, a fortnight before he took a place under Lord North, that the nation's affairs would never go on well till the minister's head was on the table of the House of Commons. Gibbon himself told the story, that he had said till both North's and Fox's heads were on the table'" (*Life of W. Wilberforce*, ed. 1839, ii., 179).

Horace Walpole, in May, 1780, spoke of "the Historian's conversion to the Court" (*Letters*, vii., 361). On April 1, 1781, he wrote: "If you will not read the Constantinopolitan Historian, you will at least not disdain to turn to a particular passage or two; look at page 46 of vol. ii. [ed. Bury, ii., 178], on the reduction of the legions, beginning at the words, "The *same timid policy*". Lord John [Cavendish] says, he is persuaded that Gibbon had thrown in that and such sentences and sentiments when he was paying court to Charles Fox, and forgot to correct them after his change" (*ib.*, viii., 24).

For some verses on Gibbon's acceptance of office, attributed to Fox, see Jesse's *George Selwyn*, iv., 278.

44. THE THREE WITNESSES AND ARCHDEACON TRAVIS (p. 210).

Gibbon, writing of "the orthodox theologians" of the African Church in the sixth century, says: "Even the Scriptures themselves were profaned by their rash and sacrilegious hands. The memorable text which asserts the unity of the Three who bear witness in Heaven is condemned by the universal silence of the orthodox fathers, ancient versions, and authentic manuscripts. . . . The pious fraud, which was embraced with equal zeal at Rome and at Geneva, has been infinitely multiplied in every country and every language of modern Europe" (*The Decline*, iv., 89).

"The memorable text" is as follows: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one" (1 *Epistle of St. John*, v., 7). In spite of Gibbon's prophecy, it disappeared in 1885 from the Revised Version of the New Testament.

Its genuineness was defended by Archdeacon Travis, who "published three short letters against Mr. Gibbon in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1782 [pp. 65, 278, 330, 522]. These letters he afterwards reprinted (4to, 1784), with two others, much longer, addressed to Mr. Gibbon. . . . He published a second edition (8vo, 1786), with some alterations, and a considerable increase of bulk" (Porson's *Letters to Travis*, Preface, p. 9).

"'I was occupied two years,' said Porson, 'in composing the *Letters to Travis;* I received thirty pounds for them from Egerton, and I am glad to find that he lost sixteen by the publication'" (Rogers's *Table-Talk*, &c., p. 302).

"When the *Letters to Travis* first appeared, Rennell said to me, 'It is just such a book as the devil would write, if he could hold a pen'" (*ib.*, p. 303).

"It is a masterly work," wrote Macaulay. "A comparison between it and the *Phalaris* would be a comparison between Porson's mind and Bentley's mind; Porson's more sure-footed, more exact, more neat; Bentley's far more comprehensive and inventive" (Trevelyan's *Macaulay*, ed. 1877, ii., 289).

The following character of Travis, given in Nichols's *Lit. Anec.*, ix., 78, is in curious contrast with the character given by Gibbon: "Though a Pluralist and a man of respectable talents, Mr. Travis was remarkably affable, facetious, and pleasant. The universality of his genius was evinced by the various transactions in which he was concerned, and in all of which he excelled. In his manners the gentleman and the scholar were gracefully and happily blended."

45. BISHOP NEWTON (p. 211).

"(*Extract from* Mr. Gibbon's *Common Place Book.*)

"Thomas Newton, Bishop of Bristol and Dean of St. Paul's, was born at Litchfield on Dec. 21, 1703, O.S. (1st Jan., 1704, N.S.), and died Feb. 14, 1782, in the 79th year of his age. A few days before his death he finished the memoirs of his own life, which have been prefixed to an edition of his posthumous works, first published in quarto, and since (1787) re-published in six volumes octavo.

"*Pp.* 173, 174 [ed. 1782, i., 129]. 'Some books were published in 1781, which employed some of the Bishop's leisure hours, and during his illness. Mr. Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* he read throughout, but it by no means answered his expectation; for he found it rather a prolix and tedious performance, his matter uninteresting, and his style affected; his testimonies not to be depended upon, and his frequent scoffs at religion offensive to every sober mind. He had before been con-

victed of making false quotations, which should have taught him more prudence and caution. But, without examining his authorities, there is one which must necessarily strike every man who has read Dr. Burnet's Treatise *de Statû Mortuorum*. In vol. iii., p. 99 [ed. Bury, iii., 212], Mr. G. has the following note: "Burnet (*de S. M.*, pp. 56-84) collects the opinions of the Fathers, as far as they assert the sleep or repose of human souls till the day of judgment. He afterwards exposes (p. 91) the inconveniences which must arise if they possessed a more active and sensible existence. Who would not from hence infer that Dr. B. was an advocate for the sleep or insensible existence of the soul after death? whereas his doctrine is directly the contrary. He has employed some chapters in treating of the state of human souls in the interval between death and the resurrection; and after various proofs from reason, from scripture, and the Fathers, his conclusions are, that human souls exist after their separation from the body, that they are in a good or evil state according to their good or ill behaviour, but that neither their happiness nor their misery will be complete or perfect before the day of judgment. His argumentation is thus summed-up at the end of the 4th chapter—*Ex quibus constat primo, animas superesse extincto corpore; secundo, bonas bene, malas male se habituras; tertio, nec illis summam felicitatem, nec his summam miseriam accessuram esse ante diem judicii.*" (The Bishop's reading the whole was a greater compliment to the work than was paid to it by two of the most eminent of his brethren for their learning and station. The one entered upon it, but was soon wearied, and laid it aside in disgust; the other returned it upon the bookseller's hands; and it is said that Mr. G. himself happened unluckily to be in the shop at the same time.)'

"Does the Bishop comply with his own precept in the next page? (p. 175 [ed. 1782, p. 131]). 'Old age should lenify, should soften men's manners, and make them more mild and gentle; but often has the contrary effect, hardens their hearts, and makes them more sour and crabbed.'—He is speaking of Dr. Johnson.

"Have I ever insinuated that preferment-hunting is the great occupation of an ecclesiastical life? (Memoirs passim); that a minister's influence and a bishop's patronage are sometimes pledged eleven deep? (p. 151); that a prebendary considers the audit week as the better part of the year? (p. 127); or that the most eminent of priests, the pope himself, would change their religion, if any thing better could be offered them? (p. 56). Such things are more than insinuated in the Bishop's Life, which afforded some scandal to the church, and some diversion to the profane laity" (Footnote by Lord Sheffield).

Newton wrote in the third person of his appointment as Bishop of Bristol and Residentiary of St. Paul's: "He was no great gainer by his preferment; for he was obliged to give up the prebend of Westminster, the precentorship of York, the lectureship of St. George's, Hanover Square, and the genteel office of sub-almoner". Bristol was, he said, "the poorest bishopric in the kingdom". When the Duke of York was told by him that "its certain clear income was £300 a year and little more; 'How then,' said he, 'can you afford to give me so good a dinner?'" The Bishop still retained his City living, and later on got the Deanery of St. Paul's (Newton's *Works*, ed. 1782, i., 9, 65, 92, 195).

He asked Green, Bishop of Lichfield, to "collate Mr. Seward of Lichfield [Boswell's *Johnson*, ii., 467] to a prebend in his church of Lincoln. The Bishop replied that at present he stood engaged eleven deep to the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Hardwick, and their friends" (*ib.*, p. 115).

After describing how "he had for several months together been at Bristol, without seeing the face of Dean, or Prebendary, or any thing better than a Minor Canon," and how the company at the Wells [Clifton] "were astonished at finding only one Minor Canon both to read and preach, and perhaps administer the Sacrament," he continues: "The church of Rochester was said to be much in the same predicament. One of the Pre-

bendaries dining with the late Bishop Pearce, he asked him, 'Pray, Dr. S., what is your time of residence at Rochester?' 'Oh! my Lord,' said he, 'I reside there the better part of the year'. 'I am very glad to hear it,' replied the good Bishop. But the Doctor's meaning was, and the fact really was, that he resided there only during the week of the Audit" (*ib.*, p. 95).

"One day at the levee George I. asked Dr. Savage how long he had stayed at Rome. Upon his answering how long, 'Why,' said the King, 'you stayed long enough; why did not you convert the Pope?' 'Because, Sir,' replied he, 'I had nothing better to offer him'" (*ib.*, p. 44).

Horace Walpole wrote on June 4, 1782 (*Letters*, viii., 229): "Have you seen Bishop Newton's Life? I have only in a Review. You may perhaps think it was drawn up by his washerwoman; but it is more probably *mangled* (*v.* the Laundress's vocabulary: I do not mean *maimed*) by Lord Mansfield himself; at least he had the MS. for some weeks in his possession."

"Dr. Newton, the Bishop of Bristol, having been mentioned, Johnson, recollecting the manner in which he had been censured by that Prelate, thus retaliated: 'Tom knew he should be dead before what he has said of me would appear. He durst not have printed it while he was alive.' Dr. Adams: 'I believe his *Dissertations on the Prophecies* is his great work'. Johnson: 'Why, Sir, it is Tom's great work; but how far it is great, or how much of it is Tom's, are other questions. I fancy a considerable part of it was borrowed.' Dr. Adams: 'He was a very successful man'. Johnson: 'I don't think so, Sir. He did not get very high. He was late in getting what he did get; and he did not get it by the best means. I believe he was a gross flatterer'" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 285).

Cowper, in 1765, described Newton as "one of our best bishops, who has written the most demonstrative proof of the truth of Christianity, in my mind, that ever was published" (Southey's *Cowper*, iii., 248).

46. THE FALL OF LORD NORTH'S MINISTRY (p. 213).

Gibbon on Oct. 14, 1775, mentions the Addresses which fill the Gazette—Addresses urging the prosecution of the war (*Corres.*, i., 271). London, Bristol, and the Protestants of Ireland were against the war. The Scotch, "almost to a man, proffered life and fortune in support of the present measures. The same approbation was given, though with somewhat less earnestness and unanimity, by a great number of towns in England. The recruiting service, however, a kind of political barometer with respect to the sentiments of the lowest orders, went on very heavily" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1776, i., 38).

Horace Walpole, writing on March 3, 1781, of *The Decline and Fall*, says (*Letters*, viii., 15): "One paragraph I must select, which I believe the author did not intend should be so applicable to the present moment. 'The Armorican provinces of Gaul and the greatest part of Spain were thrown into a state of disorderly independence by the confederations of the Bagaudæ; and the Imperial ministers pursued with proscriptive laws and ineffectual arms the rebels whom they had made' (end of chap. xxxv.)."

The following divisions on the American war show the changes of public opinion:—

	Ministry.	Opposition.	
June 12, 1781.....	172	99	(*Parl. Hist.*, xxii., 516).
Nov. 27, 1781.....	218	129	(*Ib.*, p. 729).
Dec. 12, 1781.....	220	179	(*Ib.*, p. 831).
Feb. 22, 1782.....	194	193	(*Ib.*, p. 1048).
Feb. 27, 1782.....	234	215	(*Ib.*, p. 1085).

On March 15, on a vote of want of confidence, the Ministry had a majority of 236 to 227 (*ib.*, p. 1199).

On March 20, 1782, Johnson recorded in his Diary: "The Ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis and gave thanks." To Mr. Seward he said: "I am glad the Ministry is removed. Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country" (Boswell's *Johnson*, iv., 139; *John. Miscel.*, i., 104). The next day Horace Walpole wrote (*Letters*, viii., 183): "Lord North, at the head of the mercenaries, laid down his arms yesterday, and surrendered at discretion".

Burke wrote of Lord North on July 28, 1781, a few months before he was driven from power: "I really pity Lord North. He has very nearly exhausted all the funds of his glory. He can now no longer conciliate, as formerly, the affections of mankind by his amiable refusals; or command their admiration by the magnanimity of his submissions" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 310). For his "incomparable temper," see *ante*, p. 228, *n.*; and for Lord Holland's anecdote of "his admirable good humour and pleasantry" on the night of his resignation, see Bagehot's *Biog. Studies*, ed. 1881, p. 128.

47. LORD SHELBURNE'S MINISTRY AND THE COALITION OF LORD NORTH AND FOX (p. 214).

Horace Walpole wrote on July 1, 1782 (*Letters*, viii., 240): "I can tell you but one word, but that is a momentous one. Lord Rockingham died at one o'clock at noon [*sic*] to-day."

On July 4 Lord Loughborough wrote to W. Eden (Lord Auckland): "This morning at Court C. Fox told the first person he saw, that he was come with the Seals to resign them, if Lord Shelburne should tell him he was First Lord of the Treasury. . . . Lord Shelburne and he met in the drawing-room, and had an angry conversation, as far as people could judge who only saw it. Fox went into His Majesty, and in about five minutes came out without the Seals" (*Auckland Corres.*, i., 2).

Ten days later Loughborough wrote: "The first thing is to reconcile Lord North and Fox. The first, you know, is irreconcilable to no man; the second will feel his ancient resentment totally absorbed in his more recent hostility, which I think he has no other probable means of gratifying" (*ib.*, i., 9).

Lord Macaulay (*Misc. Writings*, ed. 1871, p. 403), describing the Coalition that was now formed between these two statesmen, says of Fox: "Unhappily that great and most amiable man was, at this crisis, hurried by his passions into an error which made his genius and his virtues, during a long course of years, almost useless to his country. . . . Not three quarters of a year had elapsed since he and Burke had threatened North with impeachment, and had described him, night after night, as the most arbitrary, the most corrupt, the most incapable of ministers. They now allied themselves with him for the purpose of driving from office a statesman with whom they cannot be said to have differed as to any important question."

Fox, defending the Coalition on Feb. 17, 1783, said of Lord North: "When I was the friend of the noble Lord, I found him open and sincere; when the enemy, I found him honourable and manly. I never had reason to say of the noble Lord that he practised any of those little subterfuges, tricks, and stratagems which I found in others; any of those behind-hand and paltry manœuvres which destroy confidence between human beings, and which degrade the character of the statesman and the man" (*Parl. Hist.*, xxiii., 487).

Fox's first difference with Lord North was over the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, when he resigned his post as a Junior Lord of the Admiralty. "'Charles Fox' (observed Gibbon, in one of those sentences which render his Memoirs the favourite book of readers who hold the secret of good writing to lie in saying the most, with the least show of effort and expenditure of type)

'very judiciously thought that Lord Holland's friendship imported him more than Lord North's'" (Trevelyan's *Fox*, ed. 1880, p. 468). The sentence is not in the Memoirs, but in Gibbon's letter of Feb. 21, 1772 (*Corres.*, i., 151). Fox had rejoined the Ministry in January, 1773, as a Lord of the Treasury, but in February, 1774, he was dismissed by the Prime Minister. From that date he was in constant opposition.

On Feb. 21, 1783, resolutions of censure on the peace were carried by 207 to 190 (*Parl. Hist.*, xxiii., 571). "It is remarkable," wrote Horace Walpole on March 13, "that the counties and towns are addressing thanks for the peace which their representatives have censured" (*Letters*, viii., 351).

Lord Shelburne at once resigned. "A ministerial interregnum ensued, which lasted till the beginning of April, during which time the Kingdom remained in a state of great disorder. . . . On April 2 a new administration was announced. The Duke of Portland, First Commissioner of the Treasury; Lord North, Secretary of State for the Home Department; and Mr. Fox for the Foreign" (*Ann. Reg.*, 1783, i., 168, 175).

"When Mr. Fox kissed hands on his appointment, Lord Townshend, an observing and caustic old man, said he saw the King turn back his ears and eyes just like the horse at Astley's, when the tailor he had determined to throw was getting on him. Yet Mr. Fox was treated with civility; Lord North with manifest coldness and dislike" (*Life of Fox*, by Earl Russell, ed. 1866, ii., 5).

Gibbon, following Lord North, adhered to Fox and Burke. Eliot, who had deprived him of his seat at Liskeard because he opposed Fox and Burke, followed Shelburne and Pitt. Within twelve months he was rewarded by Pitt with a peerage. His eldest son the following year married Pitt's sister (Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 278).

The "hidden rock on which the Coalition struck" was the influence of the Crown" (*ante*, p. 207), by which, when Fox's India Bill came before the House of Lords, "a troop of Lords of the Bedchamber, of Bishops who wished to be translated, and of Scotch peers who wished to be re-elected, made haste to change sides" (Macaulay's *Misc. Writ.*, p. 407). "The Bishops waver, and the Thanes fly from us," Colonel Fitzpatrick had written (Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 150). To borrow Gibbon's words, "Corruption, the most infallible symptom of constitutional liberty, was successfully practised" (*The Decline*, ii., 372).

On Dec. 3, 1783, the third reading of the Bill had been carried in the House of Commons by 208 to 102 (*Parl. Hist.*, xxiv., 61). In the face of this majority Pitt, at the age of twenty-four, became Prime Minister.

On Dec. 19, Horace Walpole wrote (*Letters*, viii., 446): "I have only a moment's time to tell you that, at *one* this morning, His Majesty sent to Lord North and Mr. Fox for their seals of Secretary of State". On Jan. 24, 1784, Gibbon wrote to Lord Sheffield: "I most sincerely rejoice that I left the ship, and swam ashore on a plank" (*Corres.*, ii., 92).

"Pitt's contest against the House of Commons lasted from the 17th of December, 1783, to the 8th of March, 1784. In sixteen divisions the Opposition triumphed. . . . A final remonstrance, drawn up by Burke with admirable skill, was carried on the 8th of March by a single vote in a full House. . . . The Parliament was dissolved. . . . A hundred and sixty of the supporters of the coalition lost their seats" (Macaulay's *Misc. Writings*, p. 407).

48. LORD MACAULAY ON GIBBON'S "POVERTY" (p. 215).

Macaulay, with gross exaggeration, says, "that the greatest historian of the age, forced by poverty to leave his country, completed his immortal work on the shores of Lake Leman" (*Misc. Writings*, ed. 1871, p. 413). The following

facts were in print when he wrote this. Before going to Lausanne Gibbon wrote to Deyverdun: "Je dépenserais sans peine et sans inconvénient cinq ou six cents Louis" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 297). To Lord Sheffield he wrote: "In a four years' residence at Lausanne I should live within my income, save, and even accumulate my ready money; finish my History, an object of profit as well as fame, expect the contingencies of elderly lives, and return to England at the age of fifty to form a lasting independent establishment" (*ib.*, p. 306).

To Dr. Robertson he wrote: "This exile will be terminated in due time by the deaths of aged ladies, whose inheritance will place me in an easy and even affluent situation" (Stewart's *Robertson*, p. 365). One of these aged ladies, his step-mother, was so unreasonable as to outlive him; the other, his aunt, left him an estate (*Misc. Works*, ii., 432). On Nov. 14, 1783, he wrote from Lausanne: "I have the inclination and means to live very handsomely *here*" (*ib.*, p. 336). On March 21, 1785, he wrote: "I can almost promise to land in England next September twelve-month, with a manuscript of the current value of about four thousand pounds" (*ib.*, p. 377). (Gibbon had written "three thousand" (*Corres.*, ii., 126). Lord Sheffield, I infer, gave the amount received.) The savings effected by the change of residence were "about four hundred pounds or guineas a year" (*Misc. Works*, ii., 376).

Lord Sheffield, accounting for his residence abroad, said: "He was not in possession of an income which corresponded with his notions of ease and comfort in his own country. In Switzerland his fortune was ample" (*ante*, p. 247).

49. PRINCE HENRY OF PRUSSIA AND MIRABEAU (p. 222).

Gibbon wrote of Prince Henry: "He is certainly (without touching his military character) a very lively and entertaining companion. He talked with freedom, and generally with contempt, of most of the princes of Europe; with respect of the Empress of Russia; but never mentioned the name of his brother [Frederick the Great], except once, when he hinted that it was *he himself* that won the battle of Rossbach" (*Corres.*, ii., 117).

"His brother used to say, glancing towards him, 'There is but one of us that never committed a mistake'" (Carlyle's *Frederick II.*, *n. d.*, viii., 211). The only mention in Carlyle's *History* of him at Rossbach is in the King's letter, who wrote: "My brother Henri and General Seidlitz have slight hurts in the arm" (*ib.*, vii., 247). Carlyle describes the Prince's visit to Paris as "a shining event in his Life; and a profitable; poor King Louis,—what was very welcome in Henri's state of finance—having, in a delicate Kingly way, insinuated into him a 'gift of 400,000 francs' (£16,000), partly by way of retaining fee for France" (*ib.*, x., 172).

Mirabeau, who in 1786 was sent by Calonne to Berlin, "in some semi-ostensible, or spy-diplomatist character" (Carlyle's *Crit. and Misc. Essays*, *n. d.*, iv., 111), published in 1789, under the title of *Histoire Secrète de la Cour de Berlin*, the *Correspondance d'un Voyageur Français*, 1786-7, as an "*Ouvrage Posthume*". "It is diabolically good," wrote Gibbon (*Corres.*, ii., 192).

Horace Walpole wrote on Feb. 24, 1789 (*Letters*, ix., 173): "Of Mirabeau's book I have heard of nobody that has got a copy here yet but the Dutch minister, and he the first volume only. The papers to-day say it has been burnt at Paris."

"The Prince's character," wrote Lord Holland, "is admirably, though somewhat roughly, drawn," by Mirabeau (*Foreign Reminiscences*, ed. 1850, p. 60).

Mirabeau, who was in London in March, 1785, wrote to Romilly: "Vous saurez que j'ai entendu hier M. Gibbon parler, comme un des plus plats

coquins qui existent, sur la situation politique de l'Europe, et que je n'ai pas dit un mot, quoique dès la première phrase de M. Gibbon, sa morgue et son air insolent m'eussent infiniment repoussé". It might be thought that he had mistaken another man for Gibbon (who was at this time at Lausanne), had he not gone on to repeat what he said in reply when asked for his opinion by the Marquis of Lansdowne (*Life of Romilly*, ed. 1840, i., 310). For Sainte-Beuve's criticism of what Mirabeau says see *Causeries*, viii., 460.

Gibbon, who met Mirabeau's father in 1763, wrote of him: "Cet homme est singulier; il a assez d'imagination pour dix autres, et pas assez de sens rassis pour lui seul" (*Misc. Works*, i., 163).

50. CHARLES JAMES FOX AT LAUSANNE (p. 222).

Gibbon wrote on Oct. 4, 1788: "I have eat, and drank, and conversed, and sat up all night with Fox in England; but it never has happened, perhaps it never can happen again, that I should enjoy him, as I did that day, alone, from ten in the morning till ten at night. We had little politics; though he gave me in a few words such a character of Pitt as one great man should give of another his rival; much of books, from my own, on which he flattered me very pleasantly, to Homer and the Arabian Nights; much about the country, my garden (which he understands far better than I do); and, upon the whole, I think he envies me, and would do so were he minister" (*Corres.*, ii., 180). He was accompanied by his mistress, whom he afterwards married. Gibbon wrote: "Will Fox never know the importance of character?" (*Ib.*)

"Let Fox do what he will," wrote Gibbon in 1793, "I must love the dog" (*ib.*, ii., 360).

"It is not in my nature," said Fox, "to bear malice, or to live in ill-will" (*Parl. Hist.*, xxiii., 487).

Burke, speaking on Feb. 9, 1790, described Fox as "of the most artless, candid, open, and benevolent disposition; disinterested in the extreme; of a temper mild and placable, even to a fault; without one drop of gall in his whole constitution" (Burke's *Works*, ed. 1808, v., 11).

Rogers (*Table-Talk*, p. 77) reports Fox as saying that during his visit to Gibbon's house "Gibbon talked a great deal, walking up and down the room, and generally ending his sentences with a genitive case; every now and then, too, casting a look of complacency on his own portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which hung over the chimney-piece—that wonderful portrait, in which, while the oddness and vulgarity of the features are refined away, the likeness is perfectly preserved".

Horace Walpole (*Letters*, vii., 505) mentions Gibbon's "vanity, even about his ridiculous face and person". Some years earlier, however, he had written (*ib.*, vi., 311): "I know him a little, never suspected the extent of his talents, for he is perfectly modest, or I want penetration, which I know too".

51. THE SUMMER-HOUSE AT LAUSANNE (p. 225).

The last lines of the *Decline and Fall* are not worthy either of the *History* itself or of this beautiful passage. He ends by speaking of his book as a work "which, however inadequate to my own wishes, I finally deliver to the curiosity and candour of the Public".

To the kindness of the Astronomer Royal I owe the following note, which shows the age of the moon on the night when Gibbon, having laid down his pen, saw "the silver orb reflected from the waters": "The moon was new June 15d 3h 50m, G. M. T., and full June 30d 2h 38m, in the year 1787. Between 11 and 12 in the evening, local time of Lausanne, therefore, the

Moon was 12d 7h old, or 2d 15½h short of the full. The Moon was on the Meridian of Lausanne about 10 minutes to 10, local time, on the evening of June 27, 1787." Rogers, who was at Lausanne with Mackintosh in 1814, said: "My sister and I went to see Gibbon's house; and borrowing the last volume of the *Decline and Fall*, we read the concluding passages of it on the very spot where they were written. But such an amusement was not to Mackintosh's taste; he meanwhile was trotting about, and making inquiries concerning the salaries of professors, &c." (Rogers's *Table-Talk*, p. 196). "We ran to Gibbon's house," wrote Mackintosh. "We went into *la Gibbonière*, the little summer-house where he wrote his *History*, which is now somewhat dilapidated" (*Life of Mackintosh*, ii., 305).

Lord Byron wrote to John Murray on June 27, 1816: "I enclose you a sprig of Gibbon's acacia and some rose-leaves from his garden, which, with part of his house, I have just seen. You will find honourable mention, in his *Life*, made of this acacia, when he walked out on the night of concluding his history. The garden and summer-house, where he composed, are neglected, and the last utterly decayed; but they still show it as his "cabinet," and seem perfectly aware of his memory" (Moore's *Life of Byron*, ed. 1860, p. 308).

General Read, who visited Gibbon's house, La Grotte, in 1879, says that its site is now occupied by the new Post Office. The proprietor of the Hôtel Gibbon, which was built at an earlier date on part of the property, "attracted attention to the hotel garden and its historical associations, with the approval of the owners of La Grotte, who thus escaped the former horde of sight-seers". An old lady who lived there from 1802 to 1831 told the General that "for nearly a generation the pilgrimage of visitors was continuous. As every English visitor cut away a portion, the summer-house gradually disappeared from Lausanne, and was distributed in fragments through Great Britain. Bit by bit the owners renewed it, but eventually not a morsel of the original was left. The real had given way to a copy." The copy disappeared also. "A little later the guides began to point out the venerable Madame Grenier, if she chanced to be in the garden, as Gibbon's widow. Gradually this cult was forgotten, and the pilgrimages had long ceased when I first reached the city." (They had been diverted to the hotel.) An interesting view is given of the street-front of the house, where it is only one storey high, with a lofty and steep roof. On the southern side it had three stories. "It originally formed a portion of St. Francis Convent. In the gigantic garrets," continues the General, "I found parchments, diplomas, titles of nobility, portraits in oil, engravings, . . . the remains of Gibbon's theatre; in fact, the odds and ends of a family life of three or four hundred years. Here were letters of Voltaire, Rousseau, Chesterfield, Necker, De Staël, and Gibbon" (*Hist. Studies*, i., 1-10).

52. LORD SHEFFIELD ON THE AMERICAN TRADE (p. 226).

Observations on the Commerce of the American States, by John, Lord Sheffield; the sixth edition; London, 1784; in octavo (Footnote by Gibbon). It was reviewed in the *Gent. Mag.*, Sept., 1783, p. 770, where it is stated that "Pitt's bill for the provisional establishment of trade and intercourse between Great Britain and America undoubtedly gave rise to it". "Pitt desired to treat the United States on points of commerce nearly as though they had been still dependent colonies" (Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 110). For his *American Intercourse Bill* see *Parl. Hist.*, xxiii., 602, 640, 724, 894; *Observations*, pp. 3, 280. Lord Sheffield wrote on Jan. 16, 1792: "British-built commercial tonnage since 1773 has increased 318,522 tons, which is more than three-fourths of the whole commercial tonnage of France. Thanks to that illustrious writer, the Lord Sheffield" (*Corres.*, ii., 288).

Hume, at the beginning of the contest with our American colonies, had said that "a forced, and every day more precarious, monopoly of about six or seven hundred thousand pounds a year of manufactures, was not worth contending for; that we should preserve the greater part of this trade, even if the ports of America were open to all nations" (Hume's *Letters to Strahan*, p. 288). The total declared exports from England to America were said, in 1768, to amount to £2,072,000, and the imports to £1,081,000 (*ib.*, p. 292). In 1897 the exports from the United Kingdom were close on £38,000,000, and the imports were £113,000,000 (Whitaker's *Almanack*, p. 588).

For Adam Smith's defence of the Navigation Act, see *Wealth of Nations*, bk. iv., chap. 2 (ed. 1811, ii., 254). The Act was repealed in most of its provisions in 1849 by the 12 and 13 Vict., c. 29. With "the palladium" lost, our shipping has grown so rapidly that the tonnage is almost equal to that of all the other countries of the world; with our colonies thrown in, it more than equals it (Whitaker's *Almanack*, 1899, p. 726).

53. LORD SHEFFIELD ON THE TRADE OF IRELAND (p. 227).

The trade of Ireland was throttled by the selfish policy of England. In 1784 an attempt, backed by the Irish mob, was made to exclude English goods, and "to force the home-consumption by non-importation agreements". Pitt, a disciple of Adam Smith, wished to give Ireland a far freer trade. He required from Ireland a return which the clamour even of his own party forced him to increase, and which the Irish were unwilling to grant. The Lancashire manufacturers were scared at the advantages Ireland would have in the low price of labour. Fox stood forward as "the champion of high protective duties". At Manchester, he was attended into the town, he wrote, "by a procession as fine, and not unlike that upon my chairing in Westminster".

Pitt carried resolutions through the English Parliament for the basis of a commercial arrangement between the two countries. A correspondent bill being carried in the Irish House of Commons by only 127 to 108, was dropped (*Ann. Reg.*, 1786, i., 10-24; Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 261-75).

Lord Sheffield was ready to remove all restraints on Irish manufactures, provided England retained the monopoly of the colonial trade (*Observations*, &c., Preface, p. 8, and p. 382). Gibbon wrote to him on Sept. 5, 1785: "Of Ireland I know nothing, and while I am writing the decline of a great Empire, I have not leisure to attend to the affairs of a remote and petty province" (*Corres.*, ii., 136).

Lord Sheffield's "concluding observations" begin: "The most successful of our political writers are those who assert roundly that the public interests are irretrievably sunk into distress and misery. There is the greatest disposition in the people to be convinced that such doctrines are just; and they greedily adopt maxims which seem rather formed to prepare us for another world than to reconcile us to that in which we are placed" (p. 351).

54. LORD SHEFFIELD'S ELECTION FOR BRISTOL (p. 227).

Gibbon wrote to Lord Sheffield on Aug. 7, 1790: "The second commercial city invites from a distant province an independent gentleman, known only by his active spirit and his writings on the subject of trade, and names him without intrigue or expense for her representative" (*Corres.*, ii., 219). The election was not without expense. "I subscribed," Lord Sheffield wrote, "somewhat above £300 to Infirmary, Magdalens, Small Debtors, &c." (*ib.*, p. 218). The invitation was, in all likelihood, disgraceful both to Bristol and Lord Sheffield. That city rivalled Liverpool as a seat of the slave-trade,

against which the conscience of England was now rising. Shortly before the election he had published *Observations on the Project for abolishing the Slave Trade*. Gibbon wrote to him on May 15, 1790: "You have such a knack of turning a nation that I am afraid you will triumph (perhaps by the force of argument) over justice and humanity. But do you not expect to work at Beelzebub's sugar plantations in the infernal regions, under the tender government of a negro-driver?" (*Ib.*, ii., 217.) On April 17, 1791, Sheffield spoke against Wilberforce's motion for the abolition of the trade (*Parl. Hist.*, xxix., 358-9). Four days later he wrote of the debate: "I was a considerable prop to good sense against nonsense, and the most eloquent declamation on humanity" (*Corres.*, ii., 245).

On April 2, 1792, a motion was carried for the gradual abolition of the slave-trade (*Parl. Hist.*, xxix., 1158). Gibbon wrote to Lord Sheffield on May 30: "What is the cause of this alteration? If it proceeded only from an impulse of humanity I cannot be displeased even with an error; since it is very likely that my own vote would have been added to the majority. But in this rage against slavery, in the numerous petitions against the slave trade, was there no leaven of new democratical principles? no wild ideas of the rights and natural equality of man? It is these I fear" (*Corres.*, ii., 297).

"Sixty thousand blacks are annually embarked from the coast of Guinea, never to return to their native country, but they are embarked in chains; and this constant emigration . . . accuses the guilt of Europe and the weakness of Africa" (*The Decline*, iii., 52).

"The last abomination of the abominable slave-trade" (*ib.*, vi., 78).

The slave-trade was abolished by the Whigs in 1806. Had it not been for George III. it would have been abolished many years earlier (Lord Holland's *Memoirs*, &c., ii., 157; Stanhope's *Pitt*, i., 370; ii., 146; iii., 186; iv., 202).

55. SHERIDAN'S COMPLIMENT TO GIBBON (p. 228).

Mr. Sheridan said the facts that made up the volume of narrative were unparalleled in atrociousness, and that nothing equal in criminality was to be traced, either in ancient or modern history, in the correct periods of Tacitus, or the luminous pages of Gibbon (*Morning Chronicle*, June 14, 1788) (Footnote by Lord Sheffield).

"Yesterday," wrote Gibbon, "the august scene was closed for the year. Sheridan surpassed himself. . . . There were many beautiful passages in his speech, . . . and a compliment much admired to a certain Historian of your acquaintance. Sheridan, in the close of his speech, sunk into Burke's arms;—a good actor; but I called this morning, he is perfectly well. A good Actor!" (*Corres.*, ii., 172.)

"I was present," said Rogers, "on the second day of the trial; when Sheridan was listened to with such attention that you might have heard a pin drop. During one of those days Sheridan, having observed Gibbon among the audience, took occasion to mention 'the luminous author of *The Decline and Fall*'. After he had finished, one of his friends reproached him with flattering Gibbon. 'Why, what did I say of him?' asked Sheridan. 'You called him the luminous author,' &c. 'Luminous! oh, I meant voluminous'" (Rogers's *Table-Talk*, p. 63).

Sir Gilbert Elliot (first Earl of Minto) wrote on June 14, 1788: "Burke caught Sheridan in his arms as he sat down. . . . I have myself enjoyed that embrace on such an occasion, and know its value" (*Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot*, &c., 1874, i., 218). The editor, Elliot's great-niece, the Countess of Minto, says: "It is often related that at the close of the sentence the orator turned to a friend, and whispered, 'I said voluminous'. The author of the joke was Dudley Long, who was sitting next to Gibbon in

the gallery. Gibbon, as Long thought for the gratification of hearing the compliment again, asked his neighbour to tell him exactly what Sheridan had said. 'Oh,' said Long, 'he said something about your *voluminous* pages'. Lord Russell, on whose authority we give the story, was told it by Dudley Long himself."

On June 19 Gibbon dined with Hastings "by special desire" (*Corres.*, ii., 173). They had been school-fellows for a short time at Westminster.

56. WILLIAM HAYLEY (p. 230).

An Essay on History in Three Epistles, to Edward Gibbon, Esq. London, 1780 ; 4°. It seems almost incredible that Gibbon should have been pleased with such verses as the following :—

> "Yet while Polemics, in fierce league combin'd
> With savage discord vex thy feeling mind,
> And rashly stain Religion's just defence
> By gross detraction and perverted sense,
> Thy wounded ear may haply not refuse
> The soothing accents of an humbler Muse"

(*Epis.*, i., l. 17).

"(May, 1780.) There are just appeared three new *Epistles on History*, addressed to Mr. Gibbon by Mr. Hayley. They are good poems, I believe, weight and measure, but, except some handsome new similes, have little poetry and less spirit. In short, they are written by Judgment, who has set up for herself, forgetting that her business is to correct verses, and not to write them" (Walpole's *Letters*, vii., 361).

On July 3, 1782, Gibbon wrote of the poet : "He rises with his subject, and since Pope's death I am satisfied that England has not seen so happy a mixture of strong sense and flowing numbers" (*Corres.*, ii., 17). For the lines written by Porson in ridicule of Hayley—"poetarum et criticorum pessimus," as he called him—see *Johnsonian Misc.*, ii., 420.

For other stanzas of Hayley in praise of Gibbon see Gibbon's *Misc. Works*, i., 260.

57. CRITICISMS OF THE DECLINE AND FALL (p. 231).

"(Nov. 8, 1789.) Mr. Gibbon never tires me. He comprises a vast body and period of history too ; however, I do wish he had been as lucid as Voltaire, or, to speak more justly, that he had arranged his matter better" (Walpole's *Letters*, ix., 235).

"Gibbon's style is detestable, but his style is not the worst thing about him. His history has proved an effectual bar to all real familiarity with the temper and habits of imperial Rome. . . . His work is little else but a disguised collection of all the splendid anecdotes which he could find in any book concerning any persons or nations from the Antonines to the capture of Constantinople. When I read a chapter in Gibbon I seem to be looking through a luminous haze or fog :—figures come and go, I know not how or why, all larger than life, or distorted or discoloured ; nothing is real, vivid, true ; all is scenical, and, as it were, exhibited by candle light" (Coleridge's *Table-Talk*, ed. 1884, p. 245).

"(Feb., 1823.) Gibbon is a kind of bridge that connects the antique with the modern ages. And how gorgeously does it swing across the gloomy and tumultuous chasm of those barbarous centuries. . . . The perusal of his

work forms an epoch in the history of one's mind" (*Early Letters of Carlyle*, ii., 180).

Mackintosh said in 1830 that "Gibbon's accuracy was such as justly to elevate him to the rank of a great authority as an historian; and at times he is an excellent narrator,—for instance, in his account of Julian's march, and of the taking of Constantinople. The cause of his being so ill remembered is that he often insinuates instead of relating. Addison and Swift are now not read at all; Johnson and Gibbon very rarely" (*Life of Mackintosh*, ii., 476).

"I venture to assert that no work in prose, since the time of Titus Livius, is equal to Gibbon's *History*. There is somewhat of palatial magnitude and of Oriental splendour in it; nothing disorderly, nothing overcharged (Landor's *Imag. Conver.*, ed. C. G. Crump, v., 15).

"Grote said he had tested Gibbon's trustworthiness on several points, by reference to ancient writers, and invariably found his statements correct and candid. . . . He remarked upon the excellent judgment, the just appreciation of historical incidents, the freedom from bias on personal preferences, the faculty of discernment in sifting the bearing of evidence, also the vigour of expression of Gibbon; adding, however, his objection to the style in which the book is written. 'There is but *one* Gibbon,' he said" (*Life of Grote*, ed. 1873, p. 296).

Sainte-Beuve quotes with approval Guizot's admiration in Gibbon of "'l'immensité des recherches, la variété des connaissances, l'étendue des lumières, et surtout cette justesse vraiment philosophique d'un esprit qui juge le passé comme il jugerait le présent,' et qui, à travers la forme extraordinaire et imprévue des mœurs, des coutumes et des événements, a l'art de retrouver dans tous les temps les mêmes hommes" (*Causeries*, viii., 453).

Mr. John Morley (*Miscellanies*, ed. 1886, iii., 49), recording a talk he had with John Mill in 1873, writes: "He greatly dislikes the style of Junius and of Gibbon; indeed, thinks meanly of the latter in all respects, except for his research, which alone of the work of that century stands the test of nineteenth century criticism".

58. PORSON'S CRITICISM (p. 231).

"His industry is indefatigable; his accuracy scrupulous; his reading, which indeed is sometimes ostentatiously displayed, immense; his attention always awake; his memory retentive; his style emphatic and expressive; his periods harmonious. His reflections are often just and profound; he pleads eloquently for the rights of mankind, and the duty of toleration; nor does his humanity ever slumber, unless when women are ravished [1], or the Christians persecuted [2]. . . . I confess that I see nothing wrong in Mr. Gibbon's attack on Christianity. It proceeded, I doubt not, from the purest and most virtuous motive. We can only blame him for carrying on the attack in an insidious manner, and with improper weapons. He often makes, when he cannot readily find, an occasion to insult our religion; which he hates so cordially that he might seem to revenge some personal injury. Such is his eagerness in the cause that he stoops to the most despicable pun, or to the most awkward perversion of language, for the purpose of turning the Scripture [3] into ribaldry, or of calling Jesus [4] an impostor. . . . A less pardonable fault is that rage for indecency which pervades the whole work, but especially the last volumes. And, to the honour of his consistency, this is the same man who is so prudish

[1] Chapter lvii., note 54 [vii., 250, *n.* 61.]
[2] See the whole sixteenth chapter.
[3] Chapter lix., note 32 [vi., 333, *n.* 36].
[4] Chapter xi., note 63 [i., 305, *n.* 70].

that he dares not call Belisarius a cuckold, because it is too bad a word for a *decent* historian to use [*The Decline*, iv., 335]. If the history were anonymous, I should guess that these disgraceful obscenities were written by some debauchee, who having from age, or accident, or excess, survived the practice of lust, still indulged himself in the luxury of speculation; *and exposed the impotent imbecility after he had lost the vigour of the passions* [*Junius*, Letter xxiii.]" (*Letters to Travis*, Preface, p. 28).

The slumbers of Gibbon's humanity were more extended than Porson represents. In the first volume of *The Decline* he expatiates on the "amiable character" of the elder Gordian; on his "mild administration," and on the "elegant taste and beneficent disposition" which "he displayed in the enjoyment of a great estate". "His long life," he adds, "was innocently spent in the study of letters and the peaceful honours of Rome". This amiableness, this mildness, this elegance, this beneficence, this studious and peaceful innocence was not inconsistent with the slaughter of thousands of gladiators. "The public shows exhibited at his expense, and in which the people were entertained with many hundreds of wild beasts and gladiators, seem to surpass the fortune of a subject; and whilst the liberality of other magistrates was confined to a few solemn festivals in Rome, the magnificence of Gordian was repeated, when he was ædile, every month in the year, and extended, during his consulship, to the principal cities of Italy. He sometimes gave five hundred pair of gladiators, never less than one hundred and fifty" (*The Decline*, i., 175).

In describing the Roman triumph, when Kings were led "to an ignominious death," Gibbon exhibits all the unfeelingness of the sentimentalist. "When the citizen cast his eye on the vanquished Kings dragged in triumph, his own pride triumphed at once over them and insulted humanity. But if a sentiment of compassion overcame his stern prejudices, and he melted at the sight of a fallen monarch and his innocent children still unconscious of their misfortune, *his tenderness must have been rewarded with that delightful pleasure with which nature repays such tears*" [the italics are mine] (*Misc. Works*, iv., 396).

"Gibbon has but a coarse and vulgar heart, with all his keen logic, and glowing imagination, and lordly irony: he worships power and splendour; and suffering virtue, the most heroic devotedness if unsuccessful, unarrayed in the pomp and circumstance of outward glory, has little of his sympathy" (*Early Letters of Carlyle*, ii., 180).

59. LOUIS XVI., THE SUPPOSED TRANSLATOR OF THE DECLINE AND FALL (p. 232).

Querard in *Les Supercheries Littéraires Dévoilées*, 1870, ii., 723, has the following entry: "Le Clerc de Sept-Chênes, *prête-nom* (Louis XVI., roi de France). *Histoire de la décadence*, &c., par Gibbon (traduction commencée par Louis XVI., sous le nom de M. Le Clerc de Sept-Chênes; continuée, dès le quatrième tome, par MM. Démeunier et Boulard, finie par MM. Cantwel et Marinié, et revue, quant aux derniers volumes, par M. Boulard). Paris, Moutard et Maradan, 1777-95, 18 vol., in-8.

Extrait du *Roi martyr, ou Esquisse du portrait de Louis XVI.* . . . "Après en avoir traduit *cinq* volumes, M. le Dauphin, ne voulant pas être connu, chargea M. Le Clerc de Sept-Chênes, son lecteur du cabinet, de les faire imprimer sous son nom". Two years later a splendidly-bound copy of the book from the translator was given by the Count de Vergennes to the Abbé Aubert, who had passed the manuscript as censor. "Sur l'observation du censeur que M. de Sept-Chênes aurait pu se dispenser de la magnificence de la reliure, M. de Vergennes lui dit: 'C'est M. le Dauphin qui est le véritable traducteur, et qui m'a chargé de vous faire ce cadeau en son nom'. 'Nous

tenons cette anecdote de l'abbé Aubert lui-même.' A. A. B—r [Ant. Alex. Barbier]."

Sainte-Beuve believed in this story. "On a su depuis, que cette traduction à laquelle Septchênes mit son nom, était en partie de Louis XVI." (*Causeries*, &c., viii., 454).

One part of the story is so manifestly untrue that I distrust it altogether. In this anecdote Louis XVI. is spoken of as "M. le Dauphin" two years after the publication of the first part of the French translation. He became King on May 10, 1774, nearly two years before the first volume was published in English, and three years before the French publication began. Moreover, the five volumes which he is said to have translated must have included the second portion of the History, which was not published till 1781.

Of Septchênes's translation, Gibbon wrote that "it is admirably well done" (*Corres.*, i., 296). "It has been corrected and re-edited by Guizot" (*The Decline*, ed. Milman, 1854, i., 124).

In the *Almanach Royal*, 1781, p. 119, in the "Maison du Roi," among the "Secrétaires de la Chambre et du Cabinet," is entered:—

"(1771.) M. le Clerc des Sept-Chênes *en surviv* [*ance*]."

60. GIBBON'S LOVE OF LAUSANNE (p. 233).

"I shall soon visit the banks of the Lake of Lausanne, a country which I have known and loved from my early youth. Under a mild government, amidst a beauteous landscape, in a life of leisure and independence, and among a people of easy and elegant manners, I have enjoyed, and may again hope to enjoy, the varied pleasures of retirement and society. But I shall ever glory in the name and character of an Englishman." *The Decline*, Preface, p. 12.

In his glorying he copies George III., who, in his first speech to his Parliament, said: "I glory in the name of Briton" (Boswell's *Johnson*, i., 353, *n.*). George III., in his turn, copied Milton's Satan, who said, "I glory in the name" of Satan (*Paradise Lost*, x., 386).

Miss Holroyd, on Oct. 29, 1792, writing of the threatened invasion of Switzerland by the French, says: "They would not do Mr. Gibbon any harm, being 'un Anglais,' which name he will now probably condescend to make use of, and not talk so much of 'nous Suisses' as he did" (*Girlhood*, &c., p. 203). See also *Corres.*, ii., 373, where Lord Sheffield writes to him as a Swiss: "You do not deserve to be a nation," &c.

Gibbon generally speaks of the Lake as the Leman Lake, and not, as here, of the Lake of Lausanne. In *The Decline*, vi., 333, writing of St. Bernard, he says: "The disciples of the Saint record a marvellous example of his pious apathy. 'Juxta Lacum etiam Lausannensem totius diei itinere pergens, penitus non attendit, aut se videre non vidit. Cum enim vespere facto de eodem lacu socii colloquerentur, interrogabat eos ubi lacus ille esset; et mirati sunt universi.' To admire or despise St. Bernard as he ought, the reader, like myself, should have before the windows of his library the beauties of that incomparable landscape."

61. GIBBON'S LIBRARY (p. 234).

Lord Sheffield reproached Gibbon with his "damned, parson-minded, inglorious idea of leaving books to be sold". It was to Sheffield Place they should be left, "to be handed down *seris nepotibus* [Ovid, *Meta.*, vi., 138] as the Gibbonian Library". Gibbon replied: "I consider a public sale as the most laudable method of disposing of it. From such sales my books were

chiefly collected" (*Corres.*, ii., 296, 301). In his library in Bentinck Street his books had stood two deep on the shelves (*ib.*, ii., 48). The carriage of it back to England might, Sheffield thought, cost £400 (*ib.*, ii., 362).

Beckford, the author of *Vathek*, said to Cyrus Redding: "I bought Gibbon's library to have something to read when I passed through Lausanne. I shut myself up for six weeks from early in the morning until night, only now and then taking a ride. The people thought me mad. I read myself nearly blind. I made a present of the library to my physician [Dr. Schöll]" (*New Monthly Mag.*, 1844, ii., 307).

Miss Berry recorded at Lausanne on July 6, 1803: "Went to the library of Mr. Gibbon; it still remains here, though bought seven years ago by Mr. Beckford for £950. Of all the libraries I ever saw it is that which seems exactly everything that any gentleman or gentlewoman fond of letters could wish. The books are placed in two small and inconvenient rooms hired for the purpose. Mr. Beckford packed up about 2,500 volumes in two cases, which he proposed sending to England directly, but which still remain in their cases" (Miss Berry's *Journal*, &c., ed. 1866, ii., 260).

Henry Matthews, in 1818, found it in the same state—"locked up in an uninhabited house at Lausanne" (*Dairy of an Invalid*, ed. 1820, p. 316).

According to the account given to General Read in 1879 by Dr. Schöll's daughter, Beckford, after taking away a few volumes, left the remainder in her father's charge till 1815 or 1816, when he gave them to him. In 1825 Dr. Schöll sold half the library for 12,500 francs [£500] to Mr. Halliday, an Englishman, who lived in a tower near Orbe. The other half was dispersed by sale, 500 volumes going to an American University (*Hist. Studies*, ii., 505) In *Notes and Queries*, 5th S., v., 425, it is stated that the owner of the unscattered half "presented it to its present [1876] owner, who lives near Geneva".

62. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (p. 237).

In 1784 Gibbon, who seems to have learnt little from history, invested £1,300 in a new French loan (*Corres.*, ii., 93). Describing the French monarchy as it was in 1788, he said "it stood founded, as it might seem, on the rock of time, force, and opinion, supported by the triple Aristocracy of the Church, the Nobility, and the Parliaments" (*ib.*, ii., 298).

How striking a comment was to be made on the following passage in *The Decline*, v., 243, by the Reign of Terror, the execution of the King, the fall of so many of the Princes of Europe, and the rise of Napoleon! "I shall not descant on the vulgar topics of the misery of Kings; but I may surely observe that their condition, of all others, is the most pregnant with fear and the least susceptible of hope. For these opposite passions a larger scope was allowed in the revolutions of antiquity than in the smooth and solid temper of the modern world, which cannot easily either repeat the triumph of Alexander or the fall of Darius."

The following extracts show the view he took of events as they passed before him:—

"(Dec. 15, 1789.) How many years must elapse before France can recover any vigour, or resume her station among the powers of Europe!" (*Corres.*, ii., 210.)

"(April 4, 1792.) It is the opinion of the master-movers in France (I know it most certainly), that their troops will not fight, that the people have lost all sense of patriotism, and that on the first discharge of an Austrian cannon the game is up" (*ib.*, p. 293).

"(Sept. 12, 1792.) On every rational principle of calculation the Duke of Brunswick must succeed; yet sometimes, when my spirits are low, I dread the blind efforts of mad and desperate multitudes fighting on their own ground" (*ib.*, p. 311).

"(Nov. 10, 1792.) Every dog has his day; and these Gallic dogs have their day, at least, of most insolent prosperity. After forcing or tempting the Prussians to evacuate their country, they conquer Savoy, pillage Germany, threaten Spain; the Low Countries are ere now invaded; Rome and Italy tremble; they scour the Mediterranean, and talk of sending a squadron into the South Sea" (*Corres.*, ii., p. 333).

Had he written his History a few years later, it would never have contained such passages as the following: "Augustus or Trajan would have blushed at employing the meanest of the Romans in those menial offices which, in the household and bedchamber of a limited monarch, are so eagerly solicited by the proudest nobles of Britain" (*The Decline*, i., 68).

"A weak prince will always be governed by his domestics. . . . There is a chance that a modern favourite may be a gentleman" (*ib.*, *n.*).

"The *Ecclesiastes* and *Proverbs* display a larger compass of thought and experience than seem to belong either to a Jew or a King" (*ib.*, iv., 294).

"The choice of the people is the best and purest title to reign over them" (*ib.*, iv., 310).

"The power of Kings is most effectual to destroy" (*ib.*, iv., 425).

When Gibbon heard of the King's execution he wrote to Lord Sheffield: "I was much tempted to go into mourning, . . . but as the only Englishman of any mark, I was afraid of being singular" (*Corres.*, ii., 370). For his friend's abuse of him in reply, as "a damned, unworthy, temporising son of a bitch," see *ib.*, p. 374.

According to Sainte-Beuve, the French Revolution gave Gibbon "un peu de ce patriotisme dont il avait eu jusque-là si peu. . . . En considérant le champ illimité d'anarchie et d'aventures dans lequel on se lançait à l'aveugle, il en revint à aimer cette Constitution anglaise pour laquelle il s'était toujours senti assez tiède. . . . Il est curieux de voir Gibbon devenu chaleureux comme un Burke, et levant la main pour l'Arche de la Constitution comme un Fox et comme un Macaulay" (*Causeries*, viii., 469).

63. CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS (p. 237).

On March 2, 1790, Burke, speaking against Fox's motion for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, "professed his peculiar reverence for the Established Church" (*Parl. Hist.*, xxviii., 435).

Lord Holland (*Memoirs*, &c., ed. 1825, i., 5) wrote of Burke: "An extravagant veneration for all established rites and ceremonies in religion appears to have been a sentiment long and deeply rooted in his mind. It arose, indeed, from a conviction of the necessity of some establishment to the preservation of society. . . . Mr. Fox assured me that in his invectives against Mr. Hastings's indignities to the Indian Priesthood he spoke of the holy religion and sacred functions of the Hindoos with an awe bordering on devotion."

What Gibbon thought of Church establishments he shows when he writes, that by an Archbishop of Alexandria "the revenues of the Church were restored to the true proprietors, the poor of every country and every denomination" (*The Decline*, v., 71). A Jacobin would not have gone further. In another passage, quoting Selden and Montesquieu, "who represent Charlemagne as the first *legal* author of tithes," he continues: "Such obligations have country gentlemen to his memory!" (*Ib.*, v., 286.)

He wrote of Burke to Lord Sheffield in the winter of 1790-1: "I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can forgive even his superstition. The primitive Church, which I have treated with some freedom, was itself at that time an innovation, and I was attached to the old Pagan establishment" (*Corres.*, ii., 237). On May 31, 1791, he wrote: "Poor Burke is the most eloquent and rational madman that I ever knew" (*ib.*, p. 251).

Lord Sheffield records how Gibbon "became a warm and zealous advocate for every sort of old establishment. . . . In a circle where French affairs were the topic, and some Portuguese present, he, seemingly with seriousness, argued in favour of the Inquisition at Lisbon, and said he would not, at the present moment, give up even that old establishment" (*Misc. Works*, i., 328).

"It is by no means true that unbelievers are usually tolerant. They are not disposed (and why should they?) to endanger the present state of things by suffering a religion of which they believe nothing to be disturbed by another of which they believe as little. They are ready themselves to conform to anything; and are oftentimes among the foremost to procure conformity from others by any method which they think likely to be efficacious" (Paley's *Evidences*, ed. 1796, i., 32).

64. BERNE'S GOVERNMENT OF VAUD (p. 239).

Gibbon wrote on April 4, 1792, that two popular leaders had been "condemned to five-and-twenty years' imprisonment in the fortress of Arbourg. It is not believed that the proofs and proceedings against them will be published; an awkward circumstance, which it does not seem easy to justify. Some (though none of note) are taken up, several are fled, many more are suspected and suspicious. All are silent; but it is the silence of fear and discontent; and the secret hatred which rankled against government begins to point against the few who are known to be well-affected" (*Corres.*, ii., 293).

Writing of the law-suit with which he was threatened, he says: "The administration of justice at Berne (the last appeal) depends too much on favour and intrigue. . . . I must have gone to Berne, have solicited my judges in person; a vile custom!" (*Ib.*, ii., 203, 205.)

In his *Introduction à l'Histoire Générale de la République des Suisses*, he says: "Berne apporta dans les conseils des Suisses une politique plus ferme, plus réfléchie et plus éclairée; mais elle y apporta en même temps ses desseins intéressés, le goût des conquêtes, et une ambition moins soumise aux lois de la justice qu'à celles de la prudence" (*Misc. Works*, iii., 329).

Torture was used in some of the Swiss States at all events as late as 1779 (*Ann. Reg.*, 1779, ii., 16).

Vaud was freed by the French from dependence on Berne in 1798, and was made a sovereign canton in 1803 (*Penny Cyclo.*, xxvi., 161).

65. CONDEMNED TO IGNORANCE AND POVERTY (p. 239).

"Such is the constitution of civil society that, whilst a few persons are distinguished by riches, by honours, and by knowledge, the body of the people is condemned to obscurity, ignorance, and poverty" (*The Decline*, ii., 65). In another passage—a passage that reveals the great historian's ignorance of his countrymen—he says that "the illiterate peasant rooted to a single spot, and confined to a few years of existence, surpasses but very little his fellow-labourer the ox in the exercise of his mental faculties" (*ib.*, i., 218).

It is true that in another place he greatly exaggerates the extent of popular education. Speaking of Charlemagne, he says: "In his mature age the Emperor strove to acquire the practice of writing, which every peasant now learns in his infancy" (*ib.*, v., 286).

In writing of the Arabs' "perfection of language," and the abundance of their synonyms, he continues: "This copious dictionary was entrusted to the memory of an illiterate people" (*ib.*, v., 325).

Johnson would not have had any class "condemned to ignorance and poverty". "Though it should be granted," he wrote, "that those who are *born to poverty and drudgery* should not be *deprived* by an *improper education* of the *opiate* of *ignorance*, even this concession will not be of much use to direct our practice, unless it be determined who are those that are *born to poverty*. To entail irreversible poverty upon generation after generation, only because the ancestor happened to be poor, is in itself cruel, if not unjust, and is wholly contrary to the maxims of a commercial nation, which always . . . offer every individual a chance of mending his condition by his diligence. Those who communicate literature to the son of a poor man consider him as one not born to poverty, but to the necessity of deriving a better fortune from himself" (Johnson's *Works*, vi., 56 ; see also Johnson's *Letters*, ii., 437).

66. GIBBON'S THOUGHTS OF MARRIAGE (p. 241).

In 1763, and again in 1764, he told his father that he did not think of ever marrying (*Corres.*, i., 46, 70). In 1784 he wrote to Lady Sheffield : "Should you be very much surprised to hear of my being married? Amazing as it may seem, I do assure you that the event is less improbable than it would have appeared to myself a twelvemonth ago" (*Corres.*, ii., 118). Seven years later he wrote to his step-mother : "At fifty-four a man should never think of altering the whole system of his life and habits" (*ib.*, ii., 248). "I was not very strongly pressed by my family or passions," he said, "to propagate the name and race of the Gibbons" (*Auto.*, p. 275). For his "passions" see *Auto.*, pp. 60, 150, 159, 205, 244, 263, 274, and *Corres.*, i., 70 ; see also *ante*, pp. 105, 153, *n.* 4.

Miss Holroyd describes a lady, Mme. de Montolieu, "who had put Mr. Gibbon's liberty in danger. . . . It never occurs to him that she might have refused him" (*Girlhood*, &c., p. 115). For his confession that he "was in some danger" see *Corres.*, ii., 154.

It was before this lady that he fell on his knees as a lover, according to Mme. de Genlis, "une assez méchante langue, il est vrai," to borrow Sainte-Beuve's description of her (*Causeries*, viii., 468). She wrote : "Avec cette figure et ce visage étrange qu'on lui connaît, M. Gibbon est infiniment galant, et il est devenu amoureux d'une très-aimable personne, madame de Crouzas. Un jour, se trouvant tête à tête avec elle, pour la première fois, il voulut saisir un moment si favorable, et tout à coup il se jeta à ses genoux en lui déclarant son amour dans les termes les plus passionnés. Madame de Crouzas lui répondit de manière à lui ôter la tentation de renouveler cette jolie scène. M. Gibbon prit un air consterné, et cependant il restait à genoux, malgré l'invitation réitérée de se remettre sur sa chaise ; il était immobile et gardait le silence. 'Mais, Monsieur, répéta Madame de Crousaz, relevez-vous donc.— Hélas ! Madame, répondit enfin ce malheureux amant, *je ne peux pas*.' Madame de Crousaz sonna, et dit au domestique qui survint : *Relevez monsieur Gibbon*" (*Souvenirs de Félicie*, par Mme. de Genlis, ed. 1857, p. 176).

Mme. de Genlis' daughter said that her mother had made "a confusion of persons" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 350). General Read quotes *The Gent. Mag.*, 1843, p. 506, and *The Life of Cardinal Mezzofanti* to prove that the lady was Lady Elizabeth Foster, afterwards Duchess of Devonshire. In *The Gent. Mag.* it is stated that she was at Lausanne in June, 1787. She was there in 1784 ; "poorly in health," Gibbon wrote to Lady Sheffield, "but still adorable (nay, do not frown !), and I enjoyed some delightful hours by her bedside" ; and she was there again in 1792 (*Corres.*, ii., 117, 310). His letters to her are not those of a man who had made himself ridiculous before her. He would not have recalled to her his "aged and gouty limbs" (*Misc.*

Works, ii., 472). On the death of Lady Sheffield he wrote to her: "I am sure that your feeling, affectionate mind will not be surprised to hear that I set out for England next week" (*Corres.*, ii., 380).

The whole story is probably an invention.

67. THE CHANCES OF LIFE AND DEATH (p. 243).

Mr. Buffon, from our disregard of the possibility of death within the four and twenty hours, concludes that a chance which falls below or rises above ten thousand to one will never affect the hopes or fears of a reasonable man. The fact is true, but our courage is the effect of thoughtlessness, rather than of reflection. If a public lottery were drawn for the choice of an immediate victim, and if our name were inscribed on one of the ten thousand tickets, should we be perfectly easy? (Footnote by Gibbon.)

"Après y avoir réfléchi, j'ai pensé que de toutes les probabilités morales possibles, celle qui affecte le plus l'homme en général, c'est la crainte de la mort, et j'ai senti dès-lors que toute crainte, ou toute espérance dont la probabilité serait égale à celle qui produit la crainte de la mort, peut dans le moral être prise pour l'unité à laquelle on doit rapporter la mesure des autres craintes. . . . Je cherche donc quelle est réellement la probabilité qu'un homme qui se porte bien, et qui par conséquent n'a nulle crainte de la mort, meure néanmoins dans les vingt-quatre heures. En consultant les tables de mortalité, je vois qu'on en peut déduire qu'il n'y a que 10,189 à parier contre un qu'un homme de cinquante-six ans vivra plus d'un jour. Or comme tout homme de cet âge, où la raison a acquis toute sa maturité et l'expérience toute sa force, n'a néanmoins nulle crainte de la mort dans les vingt-quatre heures, quoiqu'il n'y ait que 10,189 à parier contre un qu'il ne mourra pas dans ce court intervalle de temps; j'en conclus que toute probabilité égale ou plus petite, doit être regardée comme nulle, et que toute crainte ou toute espérance qui se trouve au-dessous de dix mille ne doit ni nous affecter, ni même nous occuper un seul instant le cœur ou la tête."

The mathematician Bernoulli, after pointing out to Buffon that "l'exemption de frayeur n'est assurément pas dans ceux qui sont déjà malades," continues: "Je ne combats pas votre principe, mais il paraît plutôt conduire a $\frac{1}{10000}$ qu'à $\frac{1}{10000}$" (*Hist. Nat.*, &c., ed. 1777; *Supplément*, iv., 56.

The passage in the text is dated March 2, 1791 (*Auto.*, p. 349). Gibbon was within eight weeks of his fifty-fourth birthday. His expectation of life he derived from Buffon, who says: "Pour une personne de cinquante-quatre ans on peut parier 2,786 contre 2,588 qu'elle vivra 14 ans de plus. On peut parier 2,969 contre 2,405 qu'elle ne vivra pas 16 ans de plus" (*Supplément*, iv., 224). The expectation of life at fifty-four, calculated on the mortality of 1871-80, is sixteen years and a half (Whitaker's *Almanack*, 1899, p. 691).

These fond hopes of Gibbon came into my mind when, in Sainte-Beuve, I read that fine passage where Bossuet describes life as that "qui nous manquera tout à coup comme un faux ami, lorsqu'elle semblera nous promettre plus de repos" (*Causeries*, x., 201).

68. LIFE'S AUTUMNAL FELICITY (p. 244).

"Quelqu'un demandait au philosophe Fontenelle, âgé de quatre-vingt quinze ans, quelles étaient les vingt années de sa vie qu'il regrettait le plus; il répondit qu'il regrettait peu de chose, que néanmoins l'âge où il avait été le plus heureux était de cinquante-cinq à soixante-quinze ans; il fit cet aveu de bonne foi, et il prouva son dire par des vérités sensibles et consolantes. A cinquante-cinq ans la fortune est établie, la réputation faite, la considération

obtenue, l'état de la vie fixe, les prétentions évanouies ou remplies, les projets avortés ou mûris, la plupart des passions calmées ou du moins refroidies," &c. (Buffon, *Hist. Nat., Supplément*, iv., 413).

Napoleon Bonaparte, in the letter mentioned *ante*, p. 221, *n.* 4, quoted Fontenelle's saying that "the two great qualities necessary to live long were a good body and a bad heart" (Read's *Hist. Studies*, ii., 199).

Voltaire wrote to Mme. du Deffand in his seventieth year (*Œuvres*, lii., 239): "Rarement le dernier âge de la vie est-il bien agréable; on a toujours espéré assez vainement de jouir de la vie; et à la fin, tout ce qu'on peut faire, c'est de la supporter". Seven years later he wrote to Lord Chesterfield: "Je me borne à croire que, si vous avez du soleil dans la belle maison que vous avez bâtie, vous aurez des momens tolérables; c'est tout ce qu'on peut espérer à l'âge où nous sommes. Cicéron écrivit un beau traité sur la vieillesse, mais il ne prouva point son livre par les faits; ses dernières années furent très-malheureuses" (Chesterfield's *Misc. Works*, iii., 399).

Hume, a few months before his death, writing of the previous year when his health was being slowly undermined by disease, said: "Were I to name a period of my life which I should most choose to pass over again, I might be tempted to point to this later period. I possess the same ardour as ever in study, and the same gaiety in company" (*Letters to Strahan*, Preface, p. 32).

Bowring wrote of Jeremy Bentham: "It was principally in the latter portion of his life that his felicity was almost untroubled. The many discomforts of the early half of his existence were often contrasted by him with the quiet and habitual pleasures of his later years" (Bentham's *Works*, x., 25).

"An healthy old fellow that is not a fool is the happiest creature living" (*The Guardian*, No. 26).

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